

PRINCIPAL DIRECTED COLLABORATIVE PLANNING IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Dissertation
By
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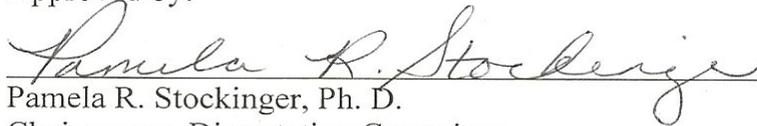
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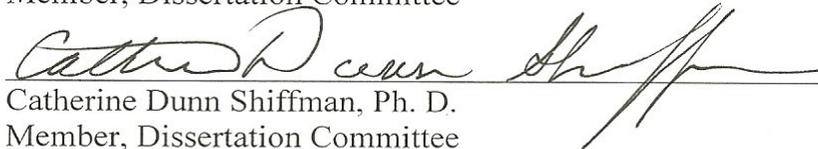
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ABSTRACT

PRINCIPAL DIRECTED COLLABORATIVE PLANNING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (MAY 2011)

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This study explores the principal driven collaborative planning (PDCP) phenomenon occurring at SUN Elementary School. SUN Elementary is located near the border of Washington, DC. Exploring this new phenomenon requires a close look at the relationships among teachers, and the relationship between the teachers and the principal. This study demands a close look into instructional leadership at SUN, the impact of PDCP on lesson planning, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the PDCP process.

The study is qualitative in nature and uses many aspects of grounded theory by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Observations of teachers in their collaborative planning (CP) sessions, and observations of teachers and the principal in their PDCP sessions were made. Teacher and principal interviews were conducted. Data were collected from these observations and interviews. The data were analyzed and findings emerged.

The following are some of the findings that emerged from this study. Departmentalization prevents collaboration on curriculum, sometimes. Working together in the CP sessions creates familiarity and teamwork among teachers, and CP makes a difference in lesson planning for most teachers. The function of the pacing sheet is ambiguous to teachers, and the pacing sheet is the agenda for the PDCP sessions. The principal helps teachers with their lessons and provides student support. The vice principal (VP) ensures that PDCP session meetings are held regularly. The principal creates collaborative planning sessions because she wants instructional conversations with her staff, and she creates a master schedule that allows for PDCP and CP meeting times. The principal has staff approval to start PDCP, and she thinks CP and PDCP are successful.

Based on this study I predict that principals who implement the PDCP process will effectively monitor teacher planning and provide assistance to teachers and students in a timely manner.

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Chapter One Introduction

This study took place in an elementary school in a suburb of Washington DC. The pseudonym SUN Elementary is used. In 2004, I assumed the role of scheduler at SUN Elementary and, to this date, I help create master schedules for SUN. I noticed an evolution of the master schedule from 2004 to 2009, which I feel appears to be fueled by the need to provide teacher planning time. As a result of the negotiated agreement between the teachers union and the board of education, all teachers in the county receive teacher planning time called preparatory time. From 2002 to 2009, preparatory time occurred for 45 minutes at the end of each contractual day at SUN. During preparatory time, teachers met with one another and conducted grade level planning sessions weekly. They discussed topics such as instructional strategies and classroom management strategies. This system of meeting after the instructional day created stress for the teachers, as they juggled other important duties such as communicating with parents, grading papers, preparing lessons, and preparing instructional material for the next day. As a result of the time-constraints at the end of the day, meeting times and days for grade level planning were unscheduled and irregular.

Through a 5 year time period, 2005 to 2010, planning time on the master schedule evolved from 45 minutes planning time at the end of the day, to an additional 3 hours of collaborative planning (CP) time during the workday weekly, plus a principal-driven collaborative planning (PDCP) session every other week. The CP and PDCP sessions

have the potential to positively impact student achievement through staff development. As a result of this potential to raise student achievement levels through staff development, I decided to study the PDCP process. This study explores the PDCP process as implemented at the elementary school. It specifically looks at the actions the principal took in the process.

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to uncover the dynamics at work among the teaching staff, and between the teaching staff and the administration in the elementary school, as the dynamics relate to PDCP. I felt that studying the PDCP could reveal possible hidden perceptions, unvoiced expectations, and a new way of conducting instructional leadership that may be useful to principals and staff in other school settings. The possible administrative techniques may also be useful in administrative situations outside of the elementary school, in other institutions of learning, and in the business sector.

Speaking Out Against the Collaborative Planning Process

With the ingrained teacher culture of autonomy, Hargreaves (1980) gives reasons why CP is avoided in many instances. Hargreaves states, “These and other features of the culture of teaching ensure that teachers are progressively socialized into a severely defective capacity to co-operate with one another. Collaboration in joint enterprises, the strong sense of co-operation, is notoriously absent among teachers” (p. 195). Hargreaves also finds that collaboration among teachers is generally avoided because of possible

teacher conflicts. Hargreaves states that these conflicts may arise from matters of policy which may require collective agreements and mutual supportiveness, as well as from trust and collaboration with colleagues. This culture of isolation and the need to avoid conflict may present a formidable barrier to creating a collaborative culture at any school.

Bredo (1977) gives reasons why the CP process seems not to be worth the effort. These reasons are real and influence decision-making as part of the hidden agenda or culture of schools. Teachers may decide against conducting CP sessions because they may not see the benefit of CP, or they may have too much to do in their classes. In addition, teachers may not have a set protocol to follow for the CP sessions, or they may be poorly prepared for the CP process. The process may also be poorly administered.

Speaking Out for the Collaborative Planning Process

Not all researchers speak out against the CP process. Most researchers encourage the practice of CP. Ross and Gray (2006), in their article on school leadership, student achievement, and teacher belief, state that principals who adopt a transformational leadership style influence teacher beliefs in working together and sharing common goals for their schools. Here Ross and Gray identify one of a number of leadership styles that may be used by a principal interested in CP.

Ross and Gray (2006) further argue that research is needed on how to improve teacher efficacy. The researchers suggest that to encourage the teaching staff to perform at desirable levels of cohesiveness, principals must diagnose the needs of the staff and engage the teaching staff in learning opportunities. Creating an environment in which

staffs will collaborate and work toward shared goals may bring benefits to the professional environment of the school and may lead to increased student achievement.

The Setting

SUN is a community school located a 15-minute drive from Washington, DC. The school contains approximately 375 students in Pre-K to Grade 6. According to the Principal's Executive Summary, "With the exception of our Special Education Transitional students and a few CHOICE students, all students reside in the community" (p. 2). Under the Public School Choice program, parents can send students to a school of their choosing if their school is labeled in need of improvement. Since SUN is the only school in the southern part of the county with a special education transition program, the special education transition students are bussed to the school. African-Americans comprise 95% of the student body. The remaining 5% are White and Hispanic. In order to preserve the anonymity of the school, the principal's executive summary is not cited.

According to the Executive Summary of the Principal:

Twenty percent of the student body qualifies for Special Education Services, while 58% of the student body qualifies for free and reduced meals (FARMS). Many of our students live in homes that lack the resources and appropriate environment to adequately provide for their educational and psychological needs. The staff is comprised of a principal, special education coordinator, 1 parent liaison, 21 instructional staff members, 13 paraprofessionals and 17 support staff members.

Eighty-five percent of the teachers are fully certified, and 15% have provisional certification. After taking the State Assessment in 2008, SUN met the adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirement for the state. SUN met AYP requirements 3 years in a row.

Planning Time During Instructional Time

From 2002 to 2005, teachers did not have planning time during instructional time as part of their master schedule. In 2006, SUN received a new principal who wanted teachers to meet and plan during their planning sessions, as opposed to planning on their own. She realized that planning time at the end of the instructional day created many irresolvable conflicts. The 2006/2007 schedule, with the end-of-the-day planning time, was seen as inadequate by the principal and needed to be changed. The principal decided to include planning time during the instructional day and asked for a master schedule to include such planning. As the schedule could not be changed midyear, the principal decided to change it the following year.

In 2007/2008, the master schedule was created with an A and a B week. Teachers were scheduled to have a planning session for 1 hour every other week (B week), in addition to their preparatory time at the end of the day. This scheduled time of 1 hour every other week eliminated the time conflict that occurred when teachers tried to fit planning into their preparatory time at the end of the day. In addition to having scheduled times, a room was set aside for teacher planning, so that all teachers knew where and when to meet for their CP sessions. CP time seemed to be a very important issue for the principal of SUN, so much so that she decided to attend the CP sessions. The time and place for the CP sessions were predictable, so the principal scheduled her own time so that she could meet and interact with the teachers in their CP sessions. The principal was still not satisfied with teachers meeting for 1 hour every other week, and felt the teachers needed more time to meet and plan. She decided to change the master schedule again the following year.

In 2008/2009, the CP session time was further refined. The principal requested that teachers be scheduled for CP in two 1 hour blocks each week. This eliminated the A and B week schedule, and dramatically increased the amount of time teachers had to conduct their CP. Now, instead of meeting for 1 hour every other week, teachers met for 2 hours every week. With this new schedule, teachers continued planning in their grade level for 2 hours weekly, in addition to meeting and conducting a PDCP session with the principal every other week.

In 2009/2010, the SUN master schedule was further refined to reflect 3 hours of CP weekly. The principal still met with the teachers every other week to conduct her PDCP session. Teachers welcomed the benefits of the CP sessions and requested that the schedules not be changed the following year.

Providing Classroom Coverage During Collaborative Planning

During 2009 to 2010, the teaching staff received 3 hours of CP every week. To keep the children engaged in meaningful activities while the classroom teachers attended the CP sessions, the specialists at the school provided classroom coverage. The Music and physical education (PE) teachers scheduled a 1 hour Music and PE block, in which the students took Music for half an hour, then PE for half an hour. Specials such as Music and P.E. were scheduled for regular and special education classes. This system worked with two regular education classes, or two regular education classes and two special education classes combined. The regular education classes held about 25 students on average, and the special education classes held about five students on average. With this schedule, half the students received Music instruction while the other half received P.E.

instruction at the same time. At the end of the half hour, the classes switched, so by the end of the hour all students completed both Music and P.E. This 1 hour Music and P.E. block occurred twice weekly. The media and guidance instructors provided classroom coverage for 1 hour weekly, thus supplying coverage for the third hour of planning time.

Staff Reaction to Collaborative Planning and Teacher Individualism

The SUN principal expressed several reasons for the progressive scheduling changes. She stated she wanted a time frame built into the schedule and time for them to have conversations with her about the children. Her staff had mixed reactions to the idea of increased contact time with the principal. Hargreaves (1993) states that teachers may prefer to work alone for a variety of reasons. Hargreaves discusses three types of isolated behaviors called “individualisms.” With “constrained individualism,” Hargreaves states teachers are faced with situational barriers which prevent them from working with others. With “strategic individualism,” Hargreaves states teachers work alone because, given the high demands of their jobs, they must concentrate their efforts to get the job done. With “elective individualism,” Hargreaves states teachers chose to work alone, even when opportunities for working with others are present. Given that teachers may offer reasons to work on their own, teacher resentment to the CP process with the principal may stem from deeper psychological aspects of teacher perception and teacher culture. Hargreaves (1980) states:

There are several strands to the cult of individualism among teachers which cannot be discussed in detail here, but probably the most important is the high valuation placed by teachers on the autonomy of each teacher in his or her own classroom. Teachers do not like to be observed in their classroom work; the presence of a colleague (let us ignore other potential visitors such as inspectors, researchers, or

parents) is often perceived to be highly threatening. It is thus that team-teaching, both within and between different subjects, is an innovation which evokes little enthusiasm from teachers. (p. 194)

Demands on the Principal for High Quality Instructional Leadership

The SUN principal actively engaged the teaching staff in instructional conversations during the CP sessions even though she had a lot to do in the school, and the teachers may have resented spending time away from their duties. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards offered an explanation as to her actions. According to the Council of Chief State School Officers, ISLLC Standards state that principals have many duties, but they have to be the instructional leader (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2009). Interpretation of leadership style, however, is left to the principal, and, whether a principal adopts a less instructional, or more managerial, style is left to the principal's discretion.

Other forces may be at work, which may have maneuvered our SUN principal to adopt her hands-on, principal-directed PDCP approach. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 places considerable pressure on principals for their school to perform. Performance in this case is measured on state achievement tests. The NCLB Act of 2001 makes clear what is meant by adequate yearly progress (AYP). AYP means that students must be tested using a standardized test, and that they must make acceptable annual progress on the test (United States Department of Education [USDE], 2001). In the case of SUN, AYP is measured using the student test scores on the state assessment test. The NCLB Act of 2001 establishes consequences for schools that do not meet AYP. These consequences include replacing the school staff and restructuring the internal

organization of the school. The principal has a mandate to pursue student achievement (USDE, 2001). The consequences for not achieving AYP at her school would be made public and could be career-changing. Therefore, our SUN principal had very good reason to engage her staff to pursue her principal-driven CP agenda.

The Principal and Use of Situational Leadership

As a leader, the SUN principal adopted a leadership style that effectively dealt with the different personalities who were unwilling to work together. This style also effectively motivated the willing members of the staff. Gates, Blanchard, and Hersey (1997) discuss a situational leadership approach for education in which they state, “Since research in the last several decades has clearly supported the contention that there is no ‘best’ style of leadership, any of the four basic styles may be effective or ineffective depending on the situation” (p. 349). The four leadership scenarios are: low relationship and low task; high relationship and low task; high task and high relationship; high task and low relationship. Gates Blanchard, and Hersey further explain that a leader provides support to followers as needed. The leader provides more support to the followers who need it the most, and less to those who need it the least. As followers mature in their tasks, the leader supplies less support. Maturity in this theory means maturity with a task and not the overall maturity of the person.

Laying the Groundwork for Collaborative Planning

The SUN principal successfully implemented CP over the past 4 years. She prepared the SUN staff for the CP process. Thousand, Villa, and Nevin (2006) offer some advice on what principals can do to prepare their staff for the CP process. Thousand Villa, and Nevin (2006) state:

Administrators also must assume responsibility for (a) articulating the rationale for collaborative planning and teaching, (b) assisting school personnel to understand the necessary changes in their traditional roles and responsibilities, (c) providing incentives and resources for collaborative planning and teaching (e.g., scheduling common planning and teaching time, opportunities to attend conferences and/or observe veteran co teaching teams), and (d) evaluating the efficiency of the collaborative planning and teaching practices at their school sites. (p. 8)

Another facet of laying the groundwork for the CP process is team building. Team building can shape the school culture towards accepting the CP process. Perez-Katz (2007), a New York high school principal, reveals the following.

After conducting a needs assessment, I found that teachers who had an ally in the building learned a lot from informal conversations with one another. In addition, I learned that the best professional development happened when teachers had well-structured time to meet and reflect on their practices, such as in Grade-based or departmental teams. I used these findings to develop the Teacher Collaboration Model (TCM) and a grant program that encourages teachers to collaborate to develop professionally. The goal of TCM is that everyone in the school collaborates--students, teachers, parents, and administrators. Almost every teacher has a collaborative partner, and teachers meet weekly to plan curricula, make decisions, and agree on common benchmarks for their classes. This practice prompts teacher dialogue about the thinking behind their planning and helps teachers reflect on their practice. (p. 39)

In addition to team building, the researchers, Thousand Villa, and Nevin (2006), suggest eight “Tips for Success in Collaborative Planning and Teaching.” These are:

- (1) Know with whom you need to collaborate.
- (2) Establish and clarify collaborative goals to avoid hidden agendas.
- (3) Agree to use a conceptual framework, language and interpersonal skills.
- (4) Practice communication skills to concurrently achieve the task and maintain relationships.
- (5) Know how to facilitate a collaborative climate.
- (6) Recognize and respect differences in motivation of collaborators.
- (7) Expect to be responsible and expect to be held accountable.
- (8)

Agree to reflect analysis of collaborative planning and celebrate often. (Thousand Villa, and Nevin., 2006, p.245)

Research Questions

While deliberating about this study, many questions came to my mind. These questions involved the principal, her staff, the PDCP process, and future planning. Where did the principal derive the idea for PDCP? What motivated her to want to create PDCP? How did she set the groundwork for the CP process? What were her thoughts on the effectiveness of PDCP, and what were her plans for the future of PDCP?

How did the principal create a work environment to deal with the causes of constrained, strategic, and elective individualism? How did she put things in place to remove the barriers between the administration and the teachers, and thus prevent constrained individualism? How did she remove some of the high-pressure demands of the job that lead to strategic individualism? How did she refocus her teachers so they chose not to work alone, as with elective individualism, but rather to join with her and the other staff members in the CP process? Was this principal at SUN sensitive to these real teacher autonomy concerns, and how did she go about addressing them?

How did teachers respond to the imposition of the CP session in their master schedule, and were the teachers participating in CP because they were forced to do so or because they wanted to do so? How did the principal's staff react to the idea of increased contact time with the principal? The principal at SUN must have been well aware of conflicts that existed in her staff because of PDCP in the schedule, yet she persevered with her PDCP process since 2006. What leadership style did the SUN principal adopt that proved

effective in dealing with and motivating the different personalities on her staff? What were the apparent benefits of CP and PDCP to the staff?

The following is my main overarching question as it explores the research problem. What actions did the SUN principal take to initiate, implement, evaluate and improve the PDCP process?

Problem Statement

As the researcher, I hoped to uncover the staff's reaction to CP and the principal's method to address the teacher issues. The planning for, evaluation of, and the outcome of the PDCP process should be revealed. In his discussion on concomitant variations, Durkheim, in 1895, cautions against looking for simplistic relationships, using cause and effect reasoning (Thompson, 2004, p. 79). Durkheim states:

It is true that the laws established by this procedure do not always appear directly in the form of casual relationships. The concomitance may be due to the fact, not that one of the phenomena is the cause of the other, but that they are both the effects of the same cause, or again, that there exists between them a third phenomenon, which is interposed and unnoticed, and is the effect of the first and the cause of the second. (p.79)

The focus of this study, therefore, is to uncover the nature of the principal-driven collaborative planning process at SUN. One expects, as Durkheim cautions, that relationships between phenomena may be interrelated as some phenomena may be dependent on others to occur.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the PDCP phenomenon occurring at SUN; specifically, the actions taken by the SUN principal take to initiate, implement, evaluate and improve the PDCP phenomenon. Exploring this new phenomenon requires a closer look at the relationships among teachers, and the relationship between the teachers and the principal. This study demands a closer look into teacher perception of the PDCP process, and the principal's perception of the PDCP process.

Limitations

While this study could be expanded to include other elementary schools, such expansion would defeat the purpose of this study which is aimed at exploring the unique principal-driven CP process that occurs at SUN. The results of this study do not guarantee transferability of theory to another school setting, and may be difficult to duplicate, as each educational setting is comprised of unique individuals who may have had different role expectations, and may conduct the business of their schools differently.

Summary

This chapter addressed the topic of this study as principal-driven collaborative planning (PDCP). The significance of the study is stated. A discussion for and against the CP process is presented. The setting of a school in a suburb near Washington DC is mentioned. The situation, as it exists in the school, with the master schedule making allowances for teachers to meet and plan during the work day, is explained. Possible staff

reaction to the PDCP process is reviewed. The demands on the principal, as well as the groundwork for creating the PDCP environment are also reviewed. The research question(s), problem statement, purpose, and limitations of the study are explored. In Chapter 2, a review of the literature on ethnography and collaborative planning is presented.

Chapter Two Literature Review

This chapter is divided into seven parts. Part 1 is the introduction. In this introduction, I present an outline of Chapter 2, briefly describing the parts of the chapter. I also explain how I collected the literature for this study. In Part 2, Collaborative Planning, I use the research to define collaboration, give some examples of collaborative planning as it exists in the research, use the research to frame the context of this study and explain why collaborative planning failed at some schools. In Part 3, Best Practices, I use the research to highlight some best practices that are employed in highly successful schools. In Part 4, the Effects of Collaborative Planning, I use the research to show the effects of collaborative planning on different stakeholders in the school community. In Part 5, Collaborative Planning and Professional Development, I use the research to define professional development, as well as show how the definitions for collaborative planning, professional development, and a professional learning community are intertwined. In Part 6, Some Final Thoughts on the Reported Literature, I discuss the research literature and justify the reasons for this study, based on the research.

Collaborative Planning: Definition, Examples, Cause for Failure

Defining collaboration.

In their definition of collaboration, Friend and Cook (1991) state, “Collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal” (p. 1). This definition of collaboration is similar to my perceived notion of collaboration. I believe in the value of shared decision making and developing common goals, as people work together in the CP process.

In another definition of collaboration, West (1990) offers an eight-step process. In developing collaborative school-based teams comprised of teachers, support services personnel, and the building principal, he offers this definition of educational collaboration for consideration:

Educational collaboration is an interactive planning or problem solving process involving two or more team members. The process consists of up to eight interrelated, progressive steps: (1) Goal setting, (2) data collection, (3) problem identification/analysis, (4) alternative solutions development, (5) action plan development, (6) action plan implementation, (7) evaluation /follow up, and (8) re-design. Team interactions throughout the process are characterized by mutual respect, trust, and open communication; consideration of each issue or problem from an ecological perspective; consensual decision making; pooling of personal resources and expertise; and joint ownership of the issue or problem being addressed. The outcome of educational collaboration may focus on changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors at one or more of three levels: child, adult or system. (p. 28)

In his definition of CP, West writes of the importance of preparing the team by laying the ground rules for behavior, establishing role expectations, creating an agenda, and creating a feedback loop for the process through evaluation and redesign. The principal of SUN should have followed steps similar to these in the preparation of her staff for the PDCP process. West’s definition of CP helps in guiding this research into the PDCP

process, and I use this definition to frame questions in the data collection phase of this study.

Present day collaboration in the education system of Japan: The Research Lesson.

Researchers Lewis and Tsuchida (1998) describe a system of collaboration called the *research lesson*, which is popular in Japan. Lewis and Tsuchida state:

Research lessons are actual lessons, taught to one's own students, but they embody a number of special features that set them apart from an everyday class. They are observed by other teachers. They are carefully planned usually in collaboration with other colleagues. They are focused and designed to embody a particular goal or vision of education. They are recorded including one or more videotapes, or one or more audiotapes, narrative and/or checklist observations, and copies of student work. They are discussed. (p. 12)

The teachers collaborate in the research lesson by sharing their pedagogical expertise with each other, through demonstration during the lesson, and by comments after the lesson. This is an excellent example of a collaboration process that works. Aspects of the Japanese research lesson example could, therefore, be copied by the education systems in place in other countries.

Lewis and Tsuchida explain the benefits of research lessons in a section entitled "The Impact of Research Lessons." They show the ripple effect of research lessons as the lessons relate to instructional practices and to the impact of the practices on the wider society. PDCP should address instructional practices and PDCP may potentially impact American education at a much wider level. Lewis and Tsuchida state:

Research lessons are centered in the practice of ordinary teachers in ordinary classrooms. But their impact does not stop there because, at the same time, a mechanism exists that allows these examples of good practice to be disseminated all over the country and thus contribute to the improvement of Japanese education: (1)

improving classroom practice, (2) spreading new content and approaches, (3) connecting classroom practice to broader goals, (4) exploring conflicting ideas, (5) creating demand, (6) shaping national policy, and (7) honoring the role of classroom teaching. (p. 15)

Lewis and Tsuchida's research addresses the potential of a systemic move toward improving instruction through the use of the creativity and the experience of teachers. This research by Lewis and Tsuchida serves to highlight stark differences between the educational system of Japan and the system in place in the United States. Lewis and Tsuchida explain the supporting conditions that are in place which allow the research lesson to be successful. The authors explain that the Japanese science curriculum contains a fraction of the topics contained in the U.S. curriculum. One benefit of this approach allows Japanese teachers more time to teach topics and, as a result, Japanese instructors teach for mastery learning. Teachers in the U.S. are at a disadvantage because they have a heavily burdened curriculum, and, in many instances, teach for content coverage at the risk of students not mastering the curriculum, in their race toward preparing students for NCLB-driven state-sanctioned assessments. Collaboration is routine for Japanese teachers. Even without research lessons, Japanese teachers are not isolated from one another as they commonly are in the U.S. One huge benefit to PDCP could be that teachers are expected to work with one another, thus eliminating the isolation of teachers in their classrooms. The SUN principal should use some of the aspects of the Lewis and Tsuchida research lesson, such as the recording and discussing of lessons, to enhance the practice of CP in her school.

Collaboration in Rhode Island: The Learning Walk.

According to Steiny (2009), the Institute for Learning (IFL) in Pittsburgh created the learning walk in counties in Rhode Island to help the schools improve instructional practices through observation and by making recommendations to staffs. Steiny states, “Essentially, the walks are visits to classrooms by a small team of school adults using a specific protocol. Groups start the process when they discuss and agree on a productive question” (p. 32). Steiny reports, “Our questions progressed from scripted ones from the University of Pittsburgh, to ones created by central office, to ones discussed at school board meetings. Now we find a topic that needs addressing and formulate a walk accordingly” (p. 32). Topics range from using accountable talk as an instructional strategy to using rubrics as an aid to learning. In this type of collaboration, a top-down approach is used. The team consists of administrators and university staff who walk through the school observing and taking notes. The walkers may not be teachers.

The Learning Walk method seems flawed, as it does not use teachers who should know a lot about their jobs, but the university collaborates only with the board of education and the administrators. The SUN principal used the learning walk at SUN. When conducted at SUN, principals and VPs walked the school, and met privately to give general feedback to the SUN principal in the form of a document. This feedback document was eventually shared with the staff. However, the feedback did not identify individual teachers, and thus did not contain the personal interaction. Maybe teachers were not named as the Walkers did not want to appear to victimize any one.

Steiny explains the feedback procedure:

The walk itself is instructive, but the discussion at the end is where adult learning happens. Walkers see the same classroom together, but don’t always have the same

impressions, so the discussion is rich with the details each person shares. In the end, the team jointly composes a letter to the whole school that describes what they saw, always beginning with positive impressions. They discuss problems only in terms of the school's big picture progress, never naming names. The teams often make recommendations. (p. 34)

The learning walks seem very similar to the research lessons of Japan. In both cases, educators were viewed practicing their pedagogy and in both cases feedback is given to the observed teachers. One major difference is the method chosen to deliver feedback. Feedback from the learning walk is sent as a letter to the school in general without singling out any teacher. However, feedback from the research lesson took place immediately after the lesson, and the teacher giving the lesson faced those who observed him teaching (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998).

Both the learning walk and the research lessons have limitations. The learning walk recommendation letter lacks the immediate feedback, evaluation, and planning that exists with the research lesson. The research lesson lacks the input of the instructional leader of the school, the principal. The need for immediate feedback evaluation and planning from the instructional leader underscores the need for a PDCP-type activity at the elementary school.

Collaborative planning in special education in California.

In the following example of collaboration, the principal at an elementary school implements a collaborative planning intervention model to assist potentially failing students. According to Carter, Prater, Jackson, and Marchant (2009):

Freedom Elementary School, in Santa Cruz, California, implemented a collaborative- pairing model designed to address problems of fragmented relationships between general and special education teachers. The school principal facilitated the

implementation of the model. The individuals involved in the collaborative process were a pair of general education teachers, family advocates, and special education staff. All teachers in the school reviewed their classroom practices with the pair of general education teachers and identified students in their classes who were at risk of failure. The pair then used school resources to plan and implement supports to address the needs of the students at risk for school failure. Over the course of 5 years, the number of students referred for special education services dropped dramatically, as did the number of students who qualified to receive special education services. (p. 60)

Interesting to this case is the fact that the CP process is used to mend relationships between special education and regular education teachers to assist failing students. At SUN, however, the collaboration between regular and special education should not be used for assisting failing students or mending relationships, but for grade level planning, sharing best practices, monitoring pacing guides and utilizing data. PDCP, therefore, has the potential to satisfy a different set of instructional goals than we see in the example by Carter Prater, Jackson, and Marchant.

Collaborative planning as part of the scheduled workday in Michigan.

Frank (2009) explains the CP situation at the Holt Public Schools in Lansing, Michigan. At Holt Public Schools, CP took place every Wednesday for 2 hours at Grades K to 6, and for almost 3 hours at Grades 7 to 12. A group of teachers developed the idea for CP. The teachers, then the school board and superintendent, and, finally, the community accepted the idea. The middle and elementary schools also instituted CP as part of their schedule. Interesting here is that the idea of adopting CP started with the teachers. The idea was approved by the superintendent and school board when the teachers showed that adding CP in the schedule would not cost any money, but would benefit the school system. In like manner, PDCP did not add any extra cost to the

school's budget at SUN elementary. Instituting PDCP however ,must have required the investment of time and effort on the part of the principal to plan the process, to prepare her staff, and to institute, maintain, evaluate, and continue planning for the process.

This scheduled CP process at Holt, Michigan, is very similar to the PDCP process occurring at SUN. In both instances, CP is scheduled into the workday. In both instances, the elementary school principal is heavily involved in the process and seeks professional development of the staff. At Holt, the CP session is for professional development. At SUN, the professional development is conducted at the monthly staff meetings for the entire staff. At SUN, the CP session should be used for grade level planning time. At Holt, the principal and all of the teachers meet for CP. The principal guides learning at the elementary school until the staff becomes experienced enough to conduct their own meetings. This means that the elementary school principal is directly involved in the CP process, until she feels teachers can conduct their professional learning on their own. At SUN one hopes the principal does not leave the teachers to their own devices, but meets with them every other week.

Other types of collaborative planning in the classroom

The authors Thousand, Villa, and Nevin (2006) discuss multiple ways to collaborate and co-teach, including working with students as collaborative partners. They list the following:

Student support options-*natural peer support* where, same age or cross age peers can assume responsibility for naturally supporting a student's participation in academic, co-curricular, and social activities. Peers may take notes and facilitate communication with others unfamiliar with the student's way of communicating or serve as role models. *Consultative support* occurs when one or more adults, often a

special educator, meet regularly with classroom teachers to keep track of student progress, assess the need to adapt or supplement materials or instruction, and problem solve as needed. *Stop-in support* occurs when consulting support providers stop by the classroom on a scheduled or unscheduled basis to observe student performance in the general education context, assess the need for any modifications to existing supports or curriculum, and talk face to face with the student, classroom teacher and peers. *Co-teaching support* occurs when two or more people share responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom. (p. 242)

Thousand, Villa, and Nevin further explain:

There are four predominant co-teaching approaches: a) *supportive teaching*, in which one teacher takes the lead and others rotate among students to provide support, b) *parallel teaching*, in which co-teachers work with different groups of students in different areas of the classroom, c) *complementary teaching*, in which co-teachers do something to enhance the instruction provided by another co-teacher, and d) *team teaching*, in which co-teachers jointly plan, teach, assess and assume responsibility for all of the students in the classroom. (p. 242)

The final student support model by Thousand, Villa, and Nevin is *individualized support* which “involves one or more adults, often times paraprofessionals, providing support to one or more students at predetermined time periods during the day or week or for most or all of the day” (p. 242).

Even though this research by Thousand, Villa, and Nevin does not mention any type of PDCP, it still serves to highlight the many options that are available for CP. These options may be useful in assisting the principal who is interested in creating a collaborating school. Interested principals may combine PDCP with the options for CP presented here.

Causes of collaborative planning failure: The importance of the principal as instructional leader.

The researcher O’Shea (2005) explains how the idea of CP fails even though a principal may be well-intentioned when creating the environment for CP. O’Shea (2005)

explains that Alisal High School is labeled as “under-performing”. The principal uses all her funding to create collaborative planning time for the teachers. She hopes the teachers will be able to create instructional strategies to raise their student achievement. However, she fails to give directions to the teachers on how to conduct their collaborative time. As a result, the planning time fails to reach its goals.

In the case of Alisal High School, one can only speculate as to why the principal does not provide teachers with specific directions for using the additional planning time. Whatever her reasons, a study of PDCP could provide her with useful information that could assist her in the planning and implementing of her CP sessions with her staff.

Best Practices

In 2009, Crow reports on an interview with a leading English educational reformer, Michael Barber, who discusses educational best practices. According to Crow, Barber states four key approaches from all over the world that create increased student achievement. Crow in Barber’s first approach states:

One is that they recruit really good people into teaching. They could recruit people with good qualifications--that is, good academic degrees-but also with personal qualifications to be a good teacher, things like their generosity, their liking of children, their ability to be an inspirer of young people. These successful systems screen for the human qualities and for the academic qualifications, and then they train them really well at the beginning. (p. 10)

In the first of Barber’s approaches, Crow highlights the importance of choosing the right people for the job. In the county that SUN belongs, the principals interview potential teacher hires before they become staff members. Principals should know that

the screening of new people is crucial to the well being of their school. In fact, choosing the right people is the first step in creating a well functioning CP team.

Crow reporting on Barber's second key approach continues:

Secondly, when those teachers get into the profession and become teachers, the system focuses on them learning continuously. There's an ethic of continuous improvement in the profession within these countries and within the successful schools. You see a lot of embedded professional development with mentoring and coaching for support. You see joint planning of lessons, with teachers teaching them separately, looking at the data, reviewing the student work, and then teaching the lesson again. There's very much a focus on improving pedagogy built into the routines of these teachers. (p.10)

This second key approach by Crow should be similar to PDCP, with the routine focus on improving teaching and using data. The principal at SUN should be using some of the suggested best practices.

Crow reports on Barber's third approach:

The third thing is that the system expects that every child will succeed. When a child falls behind, people in these systems don't say, "Oh, that child's not clever enough or comes from a poor background." They say "What's the barrier to that child keeping up with everybody else, and what do we need to do about it?" The final point from the report is that these systems generally have very good school leaders, people who are extremely well developed, who assemble the human and other resources at the school level to deliver the kind of quality I talked about (p.10).

Every school should have had a strong leader who believes in the ability of the children to succeed. It is interesting to see the staff perceptions of the principal's strength as revealed through this study, and the principal's belief that every student could succeed.

Barber is asked to explain how schools can create professional learning for teachers as is evident in successful school systems. According to Crow, Barber replies:

There seem to be some very clear lessons. What don't really work are off-site programs of an academic nature, or even nonacademic but not related to the job. I'm not saying those programs are bad. If a teacher wants to do an M.A. in educational sociology, that's a great thing to do. What I'm saying is that won't change practice or affect results in a school in a significant way. If you want to drive up the performance

of a school or school system, that's not where you should put your dollars as a government. Second, there are some very good, well-designed, top-down implemented professional learning programs that have changed the results of systems. (p. 12)

Barber describes school reform that he instituted in England. He describes how the governments trained trainers who trained principals and teachers. He states that the top-down training system works in the short term but does not work in the long run as teachers do not take ownership of the work. One of the lessons we may learn from Barber is that teachers only take ownership of a training system when checks are put into place to monitor the implementation of the system. In very much the same way as the Alisal High School incident, teachers focus their time on the most pressing needs, and programs that are not monitored are neglected. Scheduling time for CP and PDCP sessions and monitoring these sessions biweekly may have been the approach that encouraged the continued practice of PDCP at SUN.

According to Crow, as part of his advice on best practices, Barber talks about a professional learning community. He states that professional learning should be a part of the school, and it should be scheduled into the day. He suggests that teachers work in teams on ways to improve instruction. He suggests using instructional coaches and modeling lessons. Barber describes the ideal climate for teaching and learning, suggesting some practices which help create a culture of professional learning at schools. It would be interesting to see how these practices parallel the PDCP process at SUN. With PDCP, teachers should learn from one another as they plan, and their planning time is scheduled into the day. It would be interesting to see if they use instructional coaches or the modeling of lessons.

The Effects of Collaborative Planning

Benefits of collaboration.

The researchers Thousand, Villa, and Nevin (2006) demonstrate the immediate impact that CP has on student behavior and achievement. Thousand, Villa, and Nevin state the benefits of CP as, “Results included decreased referrals to intensive special education services, increased overall student achievement, fewer disruptive problems, less paperwork, increased number of students qualifying for gifted and talented education services, and decreased referrals for behavioral problems” (p. 240).

Thousand, Villa, and Nevin report on the findings of Walther-Thomas (1997) who conducted similar research on the benefits of CP. They state that students perform better academically and improve their social skills. Thousand, Villa, and Nevin suggest that students’ improvement was the direct result of spending more time with their teachers. They state that teachers grew both professionally and as a community.

Here again we see the benefits of CP to student achievement levels, as well as to student relationships with one another. In addition, Thousand, Villa, and Nevin indicate that the professional learning community was created via the CP process. CP, however, cannot exist without administrative guidance, and Walther-Thomas (1997) also reiterates that teachers need some sort of staff development to help make them better teachers. The findings are very similar to O’Shea (2005) who states that CP would fail without guidance from administrators.

Teacher retention and collaborative planning.

The Symposium Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 2002) illustrates that teacher turnover is expensive and may cost Texas as much as \$2.1 billion annually. The symposium report states that high teacher turnover negatively impacts the school community. They present four factors that affected teacher turnover: salaries, working conditions, preparation, and mentoring support in the early years of teaching. In the discussion of working conditions, the symposium report suggests, "Working conditions, including professional teaching conditions, play a substantial role in decisions to leave teaching in a particular school or district, and they contribute to decisions to leave the profession altogether" (p. 10).

The (NCTAF, 2002) report underscores the importance of a collaborative effort between school leaders and teachers. The PDCP process at SUN addresses this urgent need for collaboration. The SUN principal, by taking an active role in the guiding of teachers in their collaborative sessions, serves the role of mentor, which should impact teacher retention. The collegial climate created by a principal conducting a program such as PDCP can be the difference between a teacher deciding to stay on or deciding to leave the teaching profession.

In addition to working conditions, the symposium report underscores the urgent need for the professional learning community in the school. They state that strong professional learning communities at the school create quality teaching, which, in turn, improves student achievement. They further suggest that, "Collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers. If we want professional educators in our schools, we must turn our schools into professional workplaces" (p. 14).

Collaborative planning and professional development.

In his paper on best practices, Crow (2009) asserts the importance of CP as the most effective type of professional development. Crow asserts that CP at the school level is more effective than the traditional workshop model for professional development. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC, 2008) in its proposed amendment to Section 9101(34) of the NCLB Act, defines professional development as “a comprehensive, substantiated, and intensive approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student achievement.” (p. 6). The NSDC amendment provides guidelines stating that professional development should be conducted at the school site, not at a remote workshop off site. As PDCP is conducted on the school site this gives validity to the PDCP process and the principal’s efforts. The NDSC guidelines aligned professional development with the state academic standards and the PDCP process should as well. Both are conducted several times per week at the school by a principal. The NDSC guidelines reviews student data to evaluate student needs and to set clear educator learning goals and the PDCP process should also do the same. The principal must ensure that she assists with the planning of instructional delivery and evaluates the PDPC process to keep improving the process (NSDC, 2008).

Hord (2008) states, the students of good teachers perform better than the students of poor teachers. To improve the craft of teaching, she points out that professional development should come through the learning community. She discusses five components of professional learning communities. These components indicate what one should look for in the evaluation of a professional development program, like the PDCP process. Hord lists a shared vision, mission and goals, shared and supported leadership,

supportive structural and relational conditions, and trust between the leader and the professional community as components of the effective professional development program.

Some Final Thoughts on the Reported Literature

Carter et al. (2009) and Frank (2009) both describe situations in which the principal initiates the CP process. While these and other examples indicate that the CP process is initiated by the principal, the examples in the research do not go into substantial detail to uncover the process as it is implemented, evaluated and improved by the principal. Collaborative planning in the research falls short of the monitoring, mentoring and teacher evaluation aspect one would expect from PDCP. The literature fails to reveal the interactions among the teachers, and between the teachers and principal. Also lacking in the literature are implications of these interactions to the functioning of the school, to the students, and to the wider school and educational communities. The lack of research articles on the PDCP process emphasizes the need for research in this area of study.

In Part 2 of this study, I illustrate that CP exists in many forms. I became more informed about my topic with the knowledge of different types of CP practices. I discovered and noted that the PDCP process is not unique to SUN. PDCP, however, has existed over the tenure of the SUN's principal from 2006 to 2010 and has become a regular part of the functioning of the school. This suggests some success with the PDCP process at SUN. The intensity, constant monitoring, and success of the process at SUN may be rarer than the norm in the educational community, and again may make the PDCP process at SUN worthy of study.

Hord (2008) states that literature is lacking on how a professional learning community in the school setting is created and developed. She states that a need exists in research for studies that follow the development of these professional learning communities. This study on the PDCP process may address that need, by looking closely at the possible creation of the professional learning community at SUN, and determining how the learning community developed via the PDCP process.

Summary

Chapter 2 has been a review of literature relevant to collaborative planning. Examples, best practices, benefits, and reasons for failure are discussed. In Chapter 3, ethnography and the appropriateness of qualitative methods, grounded theory for this study, qualitative data collection, data analysis, grounded theory, and research methods used in this study are presented.

Chapter Three Research Methods

This chapter contains five parts. Part 1 is the introduction. Here a summary of the research study and problem statements is presented. In Part 2, Qualitative Methods, Data Collection, and Analysis, I use the research literature to explain my choice of a research method, as well as the method itself. Part 3 is Site Sample and Schedules. Here, reasons for selecting the site, sample selection procedures, and a data collection schedule are included. Part 4 is Data Collection Tools, in which an explanation of observations, interviews, and documents used in this study is presented. In Part 5, Data Analysis, data analysis is used based on grounded theory according to Glaser and Strauss (1967). Part 6 deals with Ethics and the Addressing of Threats to Human Subjects. Part 7 is the Conclusion, discussing various aspects of grounded theory.

Summary of the Research Study and Problem Statement

At SUN, the principal created a unique work environment that allows for 3 hours of scheduled collaborative planning time per week for teachers. This occurred in addition to the contractually allowed planning time given to teachers each day. This amount of time for planning during the workday is unusual at the elementary school level. In addition, the principal at SUN typically sits in on one of the collaborative planning sessions every

other week. While there is ample research on collaborative planning, lack of research in the area of the principal driven collaborative planning suggests that regularly scheduled participation in collaborative planning sessions by principals at the elementary school is also unusual. PDCP allows the principal and each teacher to meet at a scheduled time and to interact and plan for classroom instruction. These factors illustrate a need for research in this area.

The PDCP process achieved some level of success during the period 2006 to 2009. In the county to which Sun belongs, principals are required to conduct one or two teacher observations per year. With PDCP the SUN principal is able to monitor, mentor and evaluate teachers on a bi-weekly basis. PDCP is a very promising instructional leadership strategy and fills the monitoring, mentoring and evaluating void in instructional leadership in the school system. The PDCP session directly monitors and influences classroom instructional planning in real time. In the PDCP sessions the SUN principal asks teachers about their lessons and suggests strategies to make learning more effective. PDCP motivates teachers to try new teaching techniques with their students. Teachers find PDCP beneficial, as it impacts student learning and makes teachers better at their craft.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore and uncover the inherent character of the PDCP phenomenon that occurs at SUN by looking at the actions the SUN principal is taking to implement, evaluate and improve the PDCP process.

Qualitative Methods, Data Collection, Analysis

Choice of qualitative methods.

While working as the scheduler for the PDCP process taking place at SUN, I realized that the PDCP process had significant potential for staff development and principal teacher relationship building. I felt we could learn a lot from PDCP. The contribution of PDCP to staff development and student achievement in schools other than SUN could have a huge social benefit. For these reasons, I decided to conduct research. I hoped to look at the preparation of the staff for the PDCP process, the evolution of the process, and the way in which the PDCP was conducted and evaluated.

In the next step, I considered the type of study that would yield the most accurate answers for my questions. In discussing the quantitative research tradition, Wilson (1977) states, "In fact, the most important frameworks to understand might be those of the subjects rather than the researchers. The objective social scientist, in standardizing the interpretation, may have destroyed some of the most valuable data he or she had" (p. 250). Heeding Wilson's advice I decided against using quantitative methods which would impose a hypothesis on the PDCP process, and elected to focus on qualitative methods instead. I found that qualitative methods allow theory to emerge from the data, rather than verify theory from the data, as would have been the case with a quantitative approach. In his discussion on observed behaviors Wilson continues:

To know merely the fact that feelings, thoughts, or actions exist is not enough without also knowing the framework within which these behaviors fit. The social scientist must come to understand how all those who are involved interpret behavior in addition to the way he or she as scientist interprets it from his objective outside perspective. (p. 250)

The in-depth understanding of the PDCP phenomenon which I pursue in this study is best derived from a study that focuses on participant observation in a natural setting. Wilson (1977) further states, “Because quantitative researchers are restricted within their own perspectives, they risk being concerned about irrelevant variables” (p. 250). I chose to use open-ended interviews of participants and follow-up questions to reduce the risk of tainting this study by suggesting preconceived notions, and to avoid missing valuable theory that could emerge from the data. As I explored the PDCP process and became immersed in the culture of the school, I used qualitative tools borrowed from the ethnographic tradition. Since I hoped the data would generate theories, I used grounded theory as my chief data-gathering and data-interpretation method for this study.

Defining ethnography.

Qualitative methods in education are derived from a wide variety of influences. Those methods most appropriate to this research, however, are anthropological methods, and more specifically, methods that relate to the ethnographic research tradition. According to Erickson (1984):

What makes a study ethnographic is that it not only treats a social unit of any size as a whole but that the ethnography portrays events, at least in part, from the points of view of the actors involved in the events. (p. 52)

The event in this study is the PDCP process. In addition, portraying the points of view of the teachers and principal is of primary importance in this study. Ogbu (1981) says this about an ethnographic study:

To do good ethnography of education requires the kind of participant observation traditionally practiced by anthropologists. Thus participant observation as an ethnographic technique requires first and foremost, a long period of residence. Since

school people have their own language or argot, the ethnographer must learn it in order to carry out effective participant observation. (p. 6)

I do not have a problem understanding the school's technical language as I have been an educator for 22 years, served as an educator at this school for the past 7 years, and thus speak the language of the school.

Qualitative data collection.

Wax and Wax (1980) express this viewpoint, "Then, we shall define fieldwork as a process of social research in which the investigator attempts to enter into the universe of meanings and participate in the moral systems of this host community" (p. 29). Erickson (1977) states the following of the data collection method in the ethnographic tradition:

Researchers of the Malinowskian tradition in anthropology (and "field work sociologists," "symbolic interactionists," and most recently "ethnomethodologists" in sociology) [sic] have been concerned with social fact as social action; with social meaning as residing in and constituted by people's doing in everyday life. These meanings are most often discovered through fieldwork by hanging around and watching people carefully and asking them why they do what they do, sometimes asking them as they are in the midst of what they are doing. Because of this orientation towards social meaning as embedded in the concrete, particular doings of people- doings that include people's intentions and points of view-qualitative researchers are reluctant to see attributes of the doing abstracted from the scene of social action and counted out of context. (p. 58)

By this *counting out of context*, Erickson (1977) refers to the use of statistical methods to interpret ethnographic data. Erickson argues here that fieldwork is best interpreted using non-statistical methods, a point of view that I also share, and that is applicable to this study. In this study meaning is sought from observing the actions of the host community and from interviews.

Data Analysis.

Erickson (1977) summarizes qualitative data analysis by stating:

The qualitative researcher's ability to pull out from field notes a key incident, link it to other incidents, phenomena, and theoretical constructs, and write it up so that others may see the generic in the particular, the universal in the concrete, the relation between part and whole (or at least between part and some level of context) may be the most important thing he does. Such selection, description, and interpretation is very emic indeed ontological. It involves massive leaps of inference over many different kinds of data from different sources-field notes, documents, elicited texts, demographic information, unstructured interviews, and very possibly survey data. (p. 61)

I used Erickson's (1977) view of qualitative data analysis to help me outline the steps that were taken in this study. In this study data are collected through observations and interviews. Then, the data are analyzed through coding, generating categories, and developing theory. Erickson speaks to the fact that the most valuable tool in research studies lays not in the methods of data collection, but in the analysis of the data by the researcher.

The Purpose of Grounded Theory

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their landmark book *Discovery of*

Grounded Theory:

The purposes of comparative analysis are to validate facts, establish the generality of a fact, specify a unit of analysis for a one case study, verify theory, generate theory, but the pressure is not on the sociologist to "know the whole field" or to have all the facts "from a careful random sample." His job is not to provide a perfect description of an area, but to develop a theory that accounts for much of the relevant behavior. His job and his training are to do what these laymen cannot do--generate general categories and their properties for general and specific situations and problems. (pp. 22-30)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) propose that creating theory from field data is the goal of research, the idea I pursue in this study. Creating a theory from the data is in stark contrast to the quantitative idea of using the data to test a hypothesis. Creating theory, however, is most applicable for this study. To effectively explore the PDCP process at SUN, I observed the process, interviewed the participants, and presented findings from the analysis of the data.

Site Sample and Schedules

Sample selection procedures.

This study focuses on the PDCP process in the elementary school. Therefore, I focus on the activities of the principal and the classroom teachers as they relate to the PDCP process. All teachers in Pre-K to Grade 6, regular education, and special education teachers take part in the PDCP process. SUN has 21 classes in Pre K to Grade 6.

At SUN there are 17 regular education teachers. Of the 17 regular education teachers, 12 were interviewed. The 12 interviewed teachers had a combined teaching experience of 140 years. 5 regular education teachers were not interviewed because interviews could not be scheduled during the 4 week data collection period due to conflicts in the teacher's personal schedules. The 5 non interviewed regular education teachers had taught at SUN for more than a year.

At SUN there are 6 special education teachers. Of the 6 special education teachers 3 were interviewed. The 3 interviewed teachers had a combined teaching experience of 55 years. Three special education teachers were not interviewed because interviews could not be scheduled during the 4 week data collection period due to conflicts in the teacher's

personal schedules. Of the 3 non interviewed special education teachers one was a first year teacher and the other two were long termed substitutes.

There are also 6 special education paraprofessionals assigned to the special education classes. The Special Education paraprofessionals do not usually attend the PDCP or CP sessions as they are usually busy providing classroom coverage in order for the special education teacher to attend the meetings. All teachers in Grades Pre-K to 6 except the paraprofessionals are included in the study. The school has a principal and no vice principal so the principal will be the only administrator interviewed. Even though some teachers were not interviewed, all teachers were observed in their CP sessions and their PDCP sessions.

SUN quick facts

As stated in Chapter 1, SUN is an elementary community school located in in a suburb near Washington, DC. According to the Executive Summary of the Principal, the school has approximately 375 students in Pre-K to Grade 6. The Executive Summary of the Principal will not be cited in order to protect the identities of the participants in this study. The Executive Summary of the Principal states:

With the exception of our Special Education Transitional students and a few CHOICE students all students reside in the community.” Under the CHOICE program parents can send students to a school of their choosing. Since SUN is the only school in ... County with a Special Education Transition Program, the Special Education Transition students are bused into the school. The student body is 95% African American with 5% white and Hispanic. Twenty percent of the student body qualifies for Special Education Services, while 58% of the student body qualifies for free and reduced meals (FARMS). Many of our students live in homes that lack the resources and appropriate environment to adequately provide for their educational and psychological needs. The staff is comprised of a principal, special education coordinator, 1 parent liaison, 21 instructional staff members, 13 para-professionals and

17 support staff members. Eighty-five percent of the teachers are fully certified and 15% have provisional certification. After taking the ... State Assessment in 2008, SUN met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement for the state... SUN has met AYP requirements 3 years in a row.

Data collection schedule.

Data collection for this study took place over a 4 week period. Four weeks were needed to conduct the necessary observations in the field and to conduct interviews of the participants. All observations of the PDCP process took place in week. 1. Observations of the teachers in their grade level planning/CP sessions took place during weeks 2 and 3. Scheduled interviews of the staff and principal took place almost every day for the 4-week data collection period. The interviews were scheduled during the 45-minute teacher planning time after student dismissal (see Appendix A for the PDCP and CP observation schedules and the teacher interview schedule).

These schedules reflect 12 observations, each about an hour long. The schedules also reflect 16 interviews, each about an hour long. The total time for data collection was about 28 hours.

Data Collection Tools

Observations.

Collective observations of the participants occurred during two of their collaborative planning sessions. The first session occurred with the principal in the PDCP session. The second session followed in the teachers' grade level planning sessions. I remained a silent, non-participant observer in the room during these sessions. I observed and took

notes of activities, comments, procedures, plans, group dynamics, and any other things of interest that related to the PDCP and CP sessions.

Importantly, observations uncover the feelings of participants. McCracken (1988) states:

Without a qualitative understanding of how culture mediates human action, we can only know what the numbers tell us. The long qualitative interview is useful because it can help us to situate these numbers in their fuller social and cultural context. (p. 9)

Observations are used to gather data on the PDCP process, as observations are most appropriate at revealing nuanced behavior and interactions of participants during the PDCP and CP sessions.

Interviews: The process of interviewing.

16 participants were interviewed individually. The study group includes the principal and classroom teachers in Pre-K to Grade 6. Interviews were open-ended and semi-structured. McCracken (1988) states, “It is important to emphasize that the use of the questionnaire does not preempt the ‘open-ended’ nature of the qualitative interview. Within each of the questions, the opportunity for exploratory unstructured responses remains” (p. 21).

I designed the interviews to explore the participant’s perceptions of their role in the collaborative planning process. The interviews also explored the effectiveness of the collaborative planning process.

The average interview was an hour. Some interviews lasted an hour and a half. Teachers signed up on the interview schedule a week before the interviews began. They were reminded on the day of the interview of their scheduled interview. On the day of

their interviews, the participants entered the conference room at the appointed time and sat at a table next to me. In some cases, I entered their classes and sat next to them. I reminded the participants of the purpose of the study. I assured the participants that their responses to the interviews were confidential as only I was able to tell which participants made which responses. I told the participants that the pseudonym Teacher 1, 2, 3 etc. would be used in place of their names when the results from the study were released. The participants were reminded that they could refuse to respond to any aspect of the interview if they did not feel comfortable with the questions. The participants were asked if they had any questions or concerns before proceeding with the interviews. The participants answered brief biographical questions. Then I read the interview questions to them. The participants responded orally to the questions until the interviews were over.

I conducted most interviews in the conference room and principal's office after students had left school for the day, and during the teachers' planning time. In three instances, interviews were conducted during the school day. Teacher planning time was a 45 minute time block set aside for teacher planning daily. Teachers were scheduled to meet with me in the teacher conference room which was unoccupied after school.

To ask the right questions in interviews, I was guided by a situation-based inquiry process. Erickson (1984) states, "The fieldworker generates a situation-based inquiry process, learning through time, to ask questions of the field setting in such a way that the setting, by its answers, teaches the next situational appropriate questions to ask" (p. 54). The interview process in this study was designed to focus on the interviewee and not on writing notes. All observations and interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder and a digital video camera. I have found that the digital voice recorder placed on the table

in front of the participants recorded better audio than the digital video camera placed next to me across the room. Participants were informed that they were being recorded. I typed participant responses and asked unscripted follow-up questions. After the interviews I proofread my notes while the interview responses remained fresh in my mind. To further verify my data, I double-checked the recordings if I felt I had missed anything in my notes. The interviews and observations were later transcribed for analysis.

Documents.

This study focuses on the actions the SUN principal took to initiate, implement, evaluate and improve the PDCP process. I did not collect teacher planning documents which the teachers had brought to the planning sessions as their documents did not aid in an understanding of the principal's actions as it related to the PDCP process. The pacing sheet was created by the principal as part of the PDCP process. Therefore a copy of the pacing sheet was collected from the principal. See Appendix C. The pacing sheet consisted of two pages. On page one was the subjects Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies with columns for Themes, Skills/Objectives, and Areas of Strength and Weakness. On page two of the pacing sheet there were columns for Academic concerns, Attendance concerns, Behavior Concerns and SIT /IEP referrals. The pacing sheet was collected in hopes of understanding the planning that occur during the CP sessions, and the activities that occur during the PDCP sessions.

Data Analysis Using Grounded Theory

The data analysis method known as *grounded theory* established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is ideal for interpreting the data in this study. Grounded theory takes qualitative field data, such as the data collected in this study, and, through its varied stages, creates a theory.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain the process of generating theory from field data in their Constant Comparative Method. They describe four stages. In the manner of Glaser and Strauss, in the first stage each incident in the data collected is put into as many categories as possible. Incidents are compared to other incidents in the same category. Data collected from interviews and observations are considered as incidents. The second stage involves the integration of categories. Here, the constant comparative units change from comparison of incidents to the comparison of incidents with properties that result from incident comparison. The integrated categories are called codes. Stage 3 delimits the theory. Here, major modifications become fewer and fewer, as the next incidents of a category are compared to its properties. Non-relevant properties are taken out to clarify the logic of the theory. Elaborating details of properties are integrated into the major outline of interrelated categories. Stage 4 suggests emerging theory. Here, coded data, the transcripts of interviews, and memos of observations provide content to support the categories which emerge as themes.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) state:

Although this method of generating theory is a continuously growing process--each stage after a time is transformed into the next--earlier stages do remain in operation simultaneously throughout the analysis and each provides continuous development to its successive stage until the analysis is terminated. (p. 105)

Data Analysis Process for This Study

Transcription notes of the interviews and observations were made during the interviews and observations. Thus, during the interviews and observations, I typed what teachers said as they were stated in my field notes. In cases in which teachers spoke too quickly, I wrote a summary of what they said. After the interviews or observations were over I double-checked the field notes for accuracy, using the audio recording of the interviews and observations. Transcripts of the observations and interviews were then made.

Transcripts were read, and summary points were made. This is the first stage, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), where the data collected is placed into as many categories as possible. These summary points were copied and pasted in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets as summaries of the interviews and observations. The summary points were studied and similar thematic ideas began to emerge. This is the second stage of grounded theory, according to Glaser and Strauss, where the integration of categories occurs. I labeled these Excel documents CP code compilation, PDCP code compilation, and interview code compilation.

In order to maintain an audit trail a copy of the code compilation documents was made. Similar ideas began to emerge from the code compilation documents. The similar ideas that emerged were classified as codes and labeled CP code separation, PDCP code separation, and Interview code separation. In order to match the similar ideas with their summary points, each code was given a separate color. Each summary point was then given a color to match the code to which it belonged. Like colors were then compiled by manually manipulating the cells. In the CP code separation document, the following

codes emerged: sharing teaching strategies, sharing resources, dealing with discipline, dealing with academic concerns, planning field trips and activities, filling out the pacing sheet, special education, and teacher concerns. In the PDCP code separation document, the following codes emerged: technology, lesson evaluation, student work, math science reading, upcoming events, principal advice, student support, student issues, teacher concerns, principal leadership style, pacing guide, and VP. In the interview code separation document the following codes emerged: PDCP, CP done elsewhere, principal, VP impact, climate, pacing sheet, no staff prep, special education, teacher comment, and CP session. Repetitive ideas were observed in the coded data. In these cases, one idea was kept and the repetitions eliminated.

The coded data were then copied onto Microsoft Word documents for further analysis and saved according to the following categories: data from CP sessions, data from PDCP sessions, and data from interviews. This comprises the third stage, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), in which incidents of a category are compared to its properties, non-relevant properties are removed to clarify the logic of the theory, and elaborating details of properties are integrated into the major outline of interrelated categories. As a result, the coded data were placed in paragraphs with like ideas, as far as possible. Some coded categories were merged with others. The data from the CP session were reduced to four coded categories from the original eight. The remaining categories include Sharing Teaching Strategies and Resources, Teacher Concerns, Planning Field Trips and Activities, Filling out the Pacing Sheet, and Special Education. The data from the PDCP session are reduced to five categories from the original 12, including: the Pacing Sheet, Principal Leadership Style, Core Subject Areas, Student Issues and Support, and

Upcoming Events. The data from the interviews were reduced to eight categories from the original 10. These categories include: the Pacing Sheet, VP impact, Special Education, PDCP Sessions, CP Sessions, Staff Prep for CP, and Principal, and Teacher Comments.

I then read each category to arrive at conclusions. This is the stage four of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) grounded theory in which the data suggests emerging theory. Here the coded data, the interview notes, and observation notes provide content to support the categories which emerge as themes. Two overarching themes emerged. These were PDCP from the teacher's point of view, and PDCP from the principal's point of view. These themes developed into my conclusions. My theory emerged from these conclusions.

Plans for Addressing Quality

Techniques for establishing trustworthiness are outlined by Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993). Following guidelines of Erlandson et al. (1993), I created an audit trail by saving and dating the analysis documents every time they were updated. Separate documents were created for field notes, summary points, code compilation, code separation, further code analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations. By creating an audit trail, I was able to track the development of theory.

I also collected multiple sources of data, which were interviews of the teachers and principal, observations of teachers in their CP sessions, observations of teachers and the principal in their PDCP sessions, and the pacing guide documents. These multiple data

sources were used in the data analysis process. Findings were also based on these multiple data sources.

Ethics: Addressing Threats to Human Subjects

I discussed conducting this study with the principal of the school, SUN. She allowed me to conduct the study at her school, and agreed to participate in the study. The purpose of this study was presented to the staff at one of the monthly staff meetings. I explained the unique nature of the PDCP process at this school, and the need for research into this area. I presented the methods of data collection as observations and interviews, and the timeline of data collection to the staff. I invited teachers to ask any questions they had about the study, and I answered their questions. I told teachers that the study would be conducted in April, and May, of 2010. I informed the staff that the study was about to begin. Then I signed and asked the teachers to sign the Shenandoah University Human Subjects Review Board Informed Consent forms.

This study poses no significant threat to the participants as the participants all entered into the study voluntarily, and they had the option to refuse to answer any questions, or to refuse to take part in the study without any repercussions to them. One teacher at this school elected not to take part in the interview, and her wishes were respected.

In order to keep track of the participants during this study, I used their grade levels and last initial for identity. This tracking method helped to avoid confusion in the data collection and analysis phase of this study. However, when the findings were presented, pseudonyms were used to represent the participants. Pseudonyms such as teacher 1, and teacher 2 were used.

The pseudonym SUN was also used to replace the name of the school. The principal was not cited in the reference section and in this document even though her executive report was quoted in this document. The name of the county that SUN belonged was omitted from this document. The name of the state to which SUN belonged was removed from documents. The location of SUN was explained as being in a suburb of Washington DC. Therefore SUN could belong to multiple counties in multiple states.

Conclusion

This study uses components of grounded theory but is not a complete grounded theory study. The following are some reasons to support this alternate approach. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue against doing a literature review prior to conducting research. They state that conducting a literature review prior to data collection clouds the mind of the researcher. They suggest conducting a literature review while the data are being collected and coded, so the researcher can use the literature as another source of information to help shape his theory. I found that I needed information about the topic going into the research to better prepare myself to identify phenomena as they occurred in the data collection. In addition, I found the data collection phase of this study required my complete attention, and my time was more effectively spent focusing on data collection, data verification, and analysis than on data collection, data verification, analysis, and a literature review. In the manner of Glaser and Strauss (1967), however, I returned to the literature, and explored other literature as I analyzed my data during the data collection and analysis phase of this study.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) discuss the importance of preparing field notes, as well as writing memos on the field notes. They discuss the importance of taking apart the story within the data and using memos to illustrate the story. I followed the process outlined by Glaser and Strauss, made field notes, and used them in the coding process. I then used an understanding of the story in my conclusions and recommendations.

Summary

In this chapter, I summarize the research study and the problem statement. I use the research literature to explain qualitative methods, data collection, analysis, and my choice of research method, and I explain that research method. Schedules regarding data collection through observation and interviews are presented. The data collection tools, observations, and interviews are discussed. The use of grounded theory in the study is explained. The data collection and analysis process performed in this study is explained. Plans for addressing threats to human subjects are explained. A discussion on grounded theory is presented in the conclusion. In Chapter 4, findings are presented based on the observations of the CP and PDCP sessions, as well as on the observations based on the interview of the teachers and principal.

Chapter Four Findings

This chapter presents the findings of this study. Findings emerged from observations of the collaborative planning sessions, from observations of the PDCP sessions, from teacher interviews, and the Principal interview.

Findings directly answer the Research Problem; what actions did the SUN principal take to initiate, create, implement, evaluate and improve the PDCP process? These findings reveal that the PDCP process is seen differently by the teachers and the principal. Some findings even though they do not directly deal with the actions taken by the principal are considered valuable to this study because of their contribution in helping to understand the PDCP process at SUN.

Departmentalization Prevents Collaboration on Curriculum Sometimes

Departmentalization at this school means that teachers at the same grade level teach different subjects, and the students move from class to class. For instance, one teacher covers math and science, while the other teaches reading and social studies. These teachers plan their class' promotion ceremonies during their CP session. I observed them working together. I knew they were not collaborating on curriculum as they were departmentalized. I asked them about it, and the following exchange ensued.

Interviewer: It seems like you guys are collaborating on something.

Teacher 1: We are collaborating on something.

Teacher 2: Yeah, but not curriculum.

Teacher 1: But it's not curriculum. We collaborate on everything but curriculum.

Teacher 2: Yeah, because we can't, because we teach two different things.

Even though some classes are departmentalized, collaboration still occurs on curriculum. In the following instance, the teachers handle different subjects. One teaches math and science, and the other teaches reading and social studies. The students have problems in reading. The reading teacher explains that her students need to combine background knowledge and text clues to infer, and she asks the math teacher, "What other way could I do it, you know?" The math teacher then starts brainstorming to help the reading teacher.

Teacher 3: Do you do the reading log every night?

Teacher 4: They are supposed to read 20 minutes and they get a signature, on their summary, because I did copying all that paper.

Teacher 3: I'm trying to figure out how we can, hmm, enhance some of their background knowledge. That's the best way to do it, to get them to read more, but I know they don't really do the reading log. Even those who get signatures I know they are not really reading.

Teacher 4 went on to suggest: A summary sheet to test student reading, assigned reading for students so they would have challenging reading material, and a time during the social studies class where students could be given time to conduct this activity to help them with their reading problem.

The research question for this study asks about the actions taken by the SUN principal to evaluate and improve the PDCP process. The topic, Departmentalization Prevented Collaboration on Curriculum Sometimes, that emerged from the data, is considered by

the SUN Principal as a serious issue that needs to be addressed. In the interview below, she explains her awareness of the problem and her plans for a solution.

Principal: And another obstacle that has been shared through conversations with teachers is that, because most of the grades are departmentalized, there is really like a lack of collaboration, because either one teacher is doing a reading and one is doing a math, so there's really no dialog. So, what I am looking to do is to enhance our collaborative planning, and probably move toward vertical. So, that if we are having instructional conversations about reading or math then I would have the entire grade levels there, and they can have those kinds of conversations. So, I am mindful of some of the obstacles that teachers may not deem it as being important, and I do understand that, but I am not going to negate from being involved in the process, because that way what gets monitored gets done. And then they know that I am monitoring that. Then I know teachers will stay on top of the planning, and they know that they will be held accountable.

Working Together in the Collaborative Planning Sessions Creates Familiarity and Teamwork.

One of the research questions I pose for this study is: How does the SUN principal refocus her teachers so they choose not to work alone, as with elective individualism, but rather join with her and the other staff members in the CP process? The principal creates a regularly scheduled meeting time (see Appendix B for the SUN Master Schedule 2009/2010). This provides the opportunity for teachers to meet and discuss non-curricular issues such as ways to meet student needs, testing, as well as curricular enhancing activities. Teachers become familiar with one other as evidenced by their confiding in each other. In many instances, teachers share important non-academic personal concerns with one another. In the following exchange during the CP session, teachers talk about getting paid.

Teacher 1: We do get paid today, right?

Teacher 2: We do, if we don't, I am up the creek.

Teacher 1: I need to go pay some bills. My landlord called me last night and said, “Oh, I was just wondering about the payment.”

Teacher 2 continues by talking about the exchange with her landlady, and Teacher 1 empathized.

Other topics raised by teachers during the CP session include the status of sixth grade as a middle school class or as an elementary school class, the retention list, student grades, and information about testing. The teachers work well and get help from other teams. In the following example, teachers discuss getting math resources from a higher grade.

Teacher 1: I had already taught fractions. I already taught fractions in its simplest form at the beginning, like before Christmas.

Teacher 3: Okay.

Teacher 4: But now it’s coming back. So now I have to talk to Ms J.

Teacher 3: To take it more in depth? Okay, because that’s what I put.

Teacher 3 then explains that she includes the idea of cross grade collaboration in the pacing sheet. She then explains that she uses the fifth grade textbook at the end of fourth grade to help prepare the students for fifth grade.

In another instance of cross grade collaboration, teachers in two different grades plan a field trip to a museum in Washington, DC. The teachers plan to carry their classes together since their curricula are similar. Teachers in one grade use the CP time to plan taking their students to exhibits that enhance their lessons. They then decide that pupils will see other exhibits if they have time. They consult their field trip packet and their museum brochure in their planning.

Teacher 5: My thing is it’s so big sometimes you don’t get to the areas where you want to go.

Teacher 6: So, we're gonna go to these areas. I think there is an exhibit going on at the time, of this. Rather than just getting in the airplane.

Teacher 5: We'll make sure. Yeah, like they like to get in the airplane and go up on.

Teacher 6: Because the planets are included in it.

Teacher 5: Right.

Teacher 6: So, we'll make sure that's our main focus.

Teacher 5: We'll go to those first.

Teacher 6: Right, and if we have time left, we'll go around on the other exhibits.

The Function of the Pacing Sheet is Ambiguous to New Teachers.

The research question for this study asks: What actions does the SUN principal take to implement the PDCP process? The answer to this is the principal and VP created a pacing sheet to implement the process (see Appendix C for pacing sheet). Teachers are required to complete the pacing sheet at the CP sessions. The pacing sheet requires that they talk about and record their progress in all subjects--math, science, social studies, and health. They record assessments for every topic they cover.

In the following interview the principal outlines the reasons for creating the pacing sheet.

Interviewer: What were you thinking of when you planned the pacing sheet for I'm calling it the pacing sheet for the, for the session that you have and when teachers have they fill the sheet out during the collaborative time?

Principal: That's just a guide to know for the core subjects where they are because with the pacing guide for the curriculum teachers should be teaching skills and concepts by weeks and it's outlined that way in the book so I'm monitoring to see if they are on target with that pacing guide with the lessons and the activities and if they are off why they are off and if they plan to catch up looking at the assessments that are given in each of the core content areas how the students are performing in those areas. I also

look at action plans so if there is a problem what the teachers are going to do to resolve the issue. I look at attendance concerns, behavior concerns just the whole gamut if they need instructional resources or materials. So that form is very important and it's redundant in nature because it requires it to be done each time we meet but its done for a purpose

In the above we see the principal using the pacing sheet as a tool that helps teachers stay on pacing with the curriculum. It also helps them share their plans for teaching when they are behind. The principal also uses the pacing sheet to zero in on problems the teachers are having, and on ways teachers can solve their problems. In the following teacher interview a new teacher is asked what could be done to improve the CP session. In her reply she suggests an agenda for the CP session even though the CP session is conducted with the pacing sheet.

Teacher 10: I think it needs more structure. Right now in my opinion its just its just kind of health, I mean its just kind of whatever. It needs more structure. You know if I were to do it there would be an agenda. Because like the beginning of the year when I was conducting the am grade level meetings I came with an agenda that's the way things are supposed to be done... An agenda would be very helpful. Because it helps to establish the purpose for the meeting, and it also establish you know, structure. And I think if you give people a limit on you know on how long they can speak, or how long they have to address the issue then you can really really stick to the meat of the problem and not all the other fluff and personal opinions and things of that nature.

The new teacher demonstrates an ignorance of the reason for the pacing sheet in her response. She states the meetings need a purpose when the purpose was already stated by principal. She also discounts the personal interactions between the teachers at the CP sessions when the interactions actually make the CP process possible. Other new teachers have indicated that all they do in the CP sessions is fill out the pacing guide and more should be done.

Special Education Teachers Miss Collaborative Planning Sessions.

While exploring the literature for this study I uncovered a phenomenon by Hargreaves (1993) called strategic individualism. Hargreaves states, teachers prefer to work alone, as their jobs are very demanding and they focus their efforts to get their jobs done.

Hargreaves calls this teacher choice strategic individualism. In the research question I ask: How does she (the principal) remove some of the high pressure demands of the job that lead to strategic individualism? Participants stated that CP facilitates the meeting of regular and special education teachers. However, regular ed. teachers report that special education teachers in two specific grades did not meet regularly in the CP sessions. In one grade, special education teachers report they did not attend the CP sessions after the first quarter. In the following exchange, a teacher explains this situation to me, the interviewer.

Interviewer: (Laugh) So what happened? Doesn't (special education teacher's name) and (special education teacher's name) teach Grade X as well?

Teacher 18 : Yes.

Interviewer: Don't they teach your subject?

Teacher 18: Yes.

Interviewer: So what is, how come, the collaborative planning session doesn't work there?

Teacher 18: (Special education teacher's name) and (special education teacher's name) have not been to a collaborative planning session since the first quarter.

Regular education teachers did not know why special education teachers missed CP meetings. They assumed the special education schedules were different or the special education teachers needed to deal with behavioral issues. In the following exchange, a

special education participant explains the violent nature of his students and an ineffective paraprofessional as his reasons for missing the CP sessions.

Interviewer: Let me ask you a question about collaborative planning. What do you think about having scheduled time, 3 hours of scheduled time for the week?

Teacher 19: I wouldn't know anything about that man. I haven't had a planning period in over 5 years. I would not. I am told that my planning period is the, the half an hour before school and the half an hour after school. I haven't had a planning period in, I mean, a real planning period in four and a half, 5 years.

Interviewer: Because according to the schedule, the master schedule, there is Music/PE twice for the week and there is media/guidance. One for the week. Which gives you 3 hours of planning time to choose as you will. One hour to meet with your teammates and the other 2 hours to work out what you need for your class.

Teacher 19: It's not, you know, you know when I do, it's not possible. And was it was maybe possible year before last, but I do most of my planning at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning.

Interviewer: So you can't do your planning in school?

Teacher 19: Hmm. It's not possible not with this, not with this crew. You've seen what happened if I take my eyes off (paraprofessional) in that classroom. The kids are off the hook. Ah, and even if she took them to Music there's two or three that end up having to stay back or been banned from (teacher's name) classroom or been banned. So, where are they? They are with me. So, there, is no, it's not possible.

Another special education teacher claimed she had too much planning to do for her students as each student is at a different grade level. In the following exchange, she explains.

Interviewer: Are there any pressures on your job which make it difficult for you to work in the collaborative planning session?

Teacher 20: I think the scheduling is. We're fortunate to have scheduling to give you that free time because I have to be honest before that I didn't have free time. Do you understand what I am saying?

Interviewer: Yes.

Teacher 20: There was no free time. The hall monitors don't work for our program. I, there must be someone outside. So, it's not like regular ed. where, on a day of specials

not only do they get the collaborative planning timing and you know the special timing. They don't have to be in the cafeteria they don't have to be outside. We always had to. So, you don't have that free time. This gives me the free time, but most times I need the free time to just sit and think about—okay, what do I do next?

Interviewer: Right, right.

Teacher 20: You know, not to say it's not a positive time. It lets me know what you're doing and where I should be. I've got five classes to teach.

These findings were interesting as special education teachers in two grades missed the CP sessions, but special education teachers in another two grades attended the CP sessions. Teachers who missed the CP sessions gave reasons for missing such as inadequate support from the paraprofessional and that special education students cannot be left alone with the lunch monitors, recess monitors, and at specials. Special education teachers who attended the sessions recognized the benefits of attending and stated some of the benefits as knowing where the regular education teachers are in their pacing, knowing how the regular education kids are performing on all topics, and thus being able to compare the performance of the special education kids with the regular education kids on a biweekly basis, and exchanging teaching strategies and resources with the regular education teachers.

Teachers Feel Comfortable Working With the Principal in the PDCP Sessions.

Regardless of the benefits of CP it may seem like an imposed activity on teachers. One of the research questions for this study asks: Are the teachers doing PDCP because they have to or want to? The answer from this research is teachers want to work with the principal, and feel comfortable with the principal at the PDCP sessions. Participants state they enjoy meeting and like meeting and talking. In the following responses, various

participants respond to the interview question: How comfortable do you feel working with the principal in the PDCP session? Why is that so?

Teacher 2: Very. She's just so regular, down to earth sincere, authentic. She's just real. (Laugh) You don't feel any, hmm, any sense of intimidation. Or, I hate to say this, I've been around a lot of principals, some of 'em get this, this, I don't even know how to say the words, but almost like a monarchy way about them. I'm the queen and you're my plebes and do as I say. You know. I don't feel any of that with Mrs. (principal's name). She's just a joy to work with.

Teacher 4: Fine, perfectly fine. I'm not scared to go. Even though I may dread going because I have other things I need to do. You know papers pile up. But I like it, because honestly my very first administrator I was intimidated by. She never made me feel comfortable. It was a bad situation so.

Teacher 21: I feel comfortable working, ah, with her. She's someone that is, hmm, she understands, and she's compassionate. But I think also, also I think she's more. I think she's more as given a task she lets you, you know, perform that task, without too much, I think, intervention. I think she, maybe she wants you to ask if you need help, but hmm, I find that she pretty much lets you run with the, you know she gives you a ball; she lets you run with it. And that is something I guess if she feels that you aren't doing, then she would intervene. So, I don't know what they call it, but, hmm, someone who is always, has to be in something. It's called a, it's a style of management. Whenever they want to, they give you something to do but yet still they are doing, telling you how to do it. I don't know if you know what I mean.

Teacher 16: Really comfortable. I know she's honest with me. I know she's not judgmental. She'll tell me if I'm right; she'll tell me if I'm wrong, and I need that.

Participants stated the principal's personality made a pleasing work environment.

They claim the climate at the PDCP session is laid back and relaxed. Participants claim that PDCP has a good vibe, and they feel they can voice their opinion. In the following passages, various participants respond to the interview question: What is the climate at the PDCP sessions? Should anything be done to change this? What do you suggest?

Teacher 16: It's very relaxed and I feel I can share anything with her, and we can work together and make things work or whatever. Like last year when we had our little friend (making reference to the VP) very supportive extremely helpful and that's why a vice principal here would be worth its weight in platinum, because that frees up a lot of administration to see what's going on. And to provide back-up and everything else

that's needed. The school's intense. We take care of each other, and we know we have administration we can go to and not get told that we are being silly or stupid. I've had that; I don't like it. That's why I'm here.

Teacher 4: Peaceful. Please no, I don't like drama. (Laugh)

Teacher 22: Like I said, they're not, with Ms (principal's name). It's not relaxed, but it's not that uncomfortable vibe. It's just; it's a good climate you know where as though you feel like you can voice your opinion. You know. You're not, I don't want to use the word scared, and you're not intimidated. None whatsoever.

Teacher 4: Relaxed. No, no, no. I love the relaxed climate. No, no.

Participants feel PDCP is necessary for the principal to stay in contact with teachers.

Teachers like the principal's suggestions and listening to the principal. Participants welcome the open channel of communication with the principal at the sessions.

Participants report that they like the business-like, no-drama climate of the PDCP sessions.

Teachers Place High Value on their Planning Time.

One of the sub-research questions for this study asks: How do teachers respond to the imposition of the CP session in their master schedule? Teachers answered that they like it a lot. In the following exchanges, participants respond to the question: What are your thoughts on having 3 hours of collaborative planning for the week? This question explains to the interviewees that it refers to 3 hours on the master schedule for planning per week.

Teacher 22: (Laugh) Oh, there in, because sometimes there in, even though that is planning time, that's your own personal planning, right? I am, I do stuff in here right, to prepare for the kids. Ah, whether it is homework, class-work, books, copies, whatever, ah, I need that time. I need more time than that but I don't have it. I do, you know I get, I'm here at least, and sometimes I'm here by 6:30 [a.m.] just to prepare for the day.

Teacher 21: I love it, because you get a lot of work done. Hmm, if you're a productive person, you know what I'm saying? When I first started teaching, I used to stay at school until 9 o'clock. My husband was calling for me saying what is going on with you?

Teacher 4: I need more. Yes. Maybe not necessarily more, I would like for it to be every day. I need an every day time period where I can get myself together, because I find that the days when I don't have planning I'm rushed. I feel like I don't get a chance to kind of digress and see where I am that's when I feel like papers are piling up before me or I didn't get a chance to copy something that I needed to copy and then the next morning I'm rushing. I preferred it when we had something every day.

Teacher 4 went on to explain that she prefers half an hour every day for planning and that other teachers feel the same way.

Teacher 11: It's great, are you kidding come on. I look forward to those 3 days a week. I wish it could be four or five but I know that's impossible. It's great. Its great if used the way it was designed. One day meeting as a grade level, and the other 2 days it gives you time to catch up on you know, your grades, and if you have to make any parent calls, so it's great.

Participants feel they need and like the 3 hours of planning for the week because they do not have enough time during the day to plan, and, without it, they would need to plan at home over dinner. Teachers use the time to plan activities and field trips, and to check grades. Participants say they need more time to talk about achievement, what works, successful teaching hints and tricks to assist students with learning.

The principal in her interview relates how teachers are defensive when they feel they might lose planning time with PDCP. In the passage below, she explains how she allays their fears.

Principal: Well, there were a few people that initially thought with the schedule, well, because I think it's like 2 or 3 days that they have the 2 hours, and then they were, they were thinking they were being slighted time. And once I pointed out to them that they were not losing any time contractually that they actually were given more time, and then those kinds of concerns dissipated. But, at first it was some resistance about whether they were going to be slighted their planning time. And the conversation was- is that, I wasn't going to meet with them on both weeks; it was just going to alternate.

Collaborative Planning Makes a Difference in Lesson Planning for Most.

In order for CP to be continued as an activity it must be seen as beneficial to the staff and students. A sub-research question for this study asks: What are the apparent benefits of CP and PDCP to the staff? Most teachers feel CP makes a difference in lesson planning and instruction. Participants say they use things spoken of in CP sessions. They say CP helps with lesson planning and grading. In the following passages, participants respond to the interview question, “How is the collaborative planning session making a difference in your lesson planning and then your instruction?” Is it making a difference, and in what ways? This first participant states that CP helps her in math and reading.

Teacher 20: What it has done is I, say for instance in, hmm, well I can say in math and reading I will listen to the regular ed. teachers and they will say I tried x, y, and z or I tried a, hmm, let’s say am I think (teacher name) said one time, I tried a, an outline. She said an outline was it? And I tried it. I mean I was hitting my head across the. I could not understand, and even going back to see what I had done before didn’t make sense, and hmm, you know, I’ve pulled those kinds of things from them just sitting there listening. Ah, and the same with math.

The next participant feels that CP helps her with social studies and reading.

Teacher 13: It keeps me on track. You do have to check, you know several sources, so you check the curriculum frameworks. Sometimes they skip a story. You know you can’t just take your book and then go straight through it from start to finish. You have to be aware that sometimes it jumps over things or skips this and that. So, when we meet that might come up. You know--oh don’t worry about reading. We’re not reading such and such next. It jumps over to blah, blah, blah. You go, oh my God, I didn’t even notice! You know? (Laugh) So, there are a lot of reminders and hints. And, hmm, areas where we can merge information like social studies and reading are both looking at voyages of say the Mayflower and the pilgrims. Things like that. So, you kinda can overlap your materials. So, it helps it just helps you plan your lessons. It helps with the grading.

The following participant states that CP helps her with pacing.

Teacher 9: I would say yes because it keeps me, like I said, it keeps me on task to know this is where I should be. If I’m not where I should be, then I have to pump it up a

little bit or maybe slow down a little bit because again, in the long run, I want my children to be able to learn.

The next participant states that CP allows her to get the most successful approaches to teaching from other grade levels.

Teacher 4: I'm pretty much me when it comes to teaching but it helps when I talk to other teachers, and not just my teammates either. Because sometimes another team has planning that day and we can kind a pick their brain about what they're doing even though the concept may be watered down. Maybe a X grade class as opposed to a X grade class which is a little higher up. It's good to see what they're doing too. Hmm, especially, because like, especially with reading. Everybody has to do inferences, drawing conclusions, all that good stuff. Author's viewpoint; how can we make it more fun or interesting? Let's pick their brain and see what they are doing. Hmm, and then especially with math, I like to sometimes go pick (teacher's name) brain.

The next participant reports that CP allows her to focus her lessons.

Teacher 9: Because of where I'm at, I'm able to extend my lesson when I'm with other teachers. Because they see what I could add, what I really don't need, in order for the students to grasp the concept so it does help. And sometimes I have to revise it, you know based on what we say, what we talked about.

The following participant states that she is a better teacher because of CP.

Teacher 23: Yeah, am before. Well, the difference for me, I have to me learned to be, I would say I've got more effective in my delivery of lessons through collaborative planning.

The Teacher 23 goes on to state that her present grade level team is more beneficial to her than her previous team because team members are more willing to work together in her present grade.

Participants say a good deal about CP making a difference in their lesson planning. They find that additional ideas obtained from CP allow them to go into more depth with more ideas. They report that CP offers new paradigms and sometimes nuggets teachers hadn't heard before which allows them to better help students. CP allows teachers to talk about curriculum, teaching improvement strategies, and sharing resources.

Teachers See the Principal's Leadership Style as Effective.

A principal's leadership style could be defined by the way she deals with staff and her ability to motivate them. The research question for this study asks: What leadership style does the SUN principal adopt that proves effective in dealing with and motivating the different personalities on her staff? Her leadership style is identified by looking at a combination of her actions. In the following passages, a participant explains the transparency of the principal.

Teacher 22: Well, I think because she is upfront about what's going on, she's not trying to hide anything; she's trying to get input and I think the most important thing that Ms (principal's name) tries to make sure that you have everything that you need to have a productive year and the kids have a successful year.

In the next excerpt, the participant talks about the principal not being negative.

Teacher 20: Well, I mean for what I know right now, I think that she's doing what I expect her to do and that is come in, give feedback as to what's happening in the county, in reference to how we perform in our jobs. Support us as instructors and teachers and hear us out. Now Ms (principal's name) is not a negative person. She's not a person that dwells in negativity or unproductive things that go on in the school. She wants you to, hmm, she wants you to be productive; she wants the school to be productive.

In the following interview excerpt, the participant describes the principal.

Teacher 12: I believe that first of all Ms (principal's name) is a great leader. I think leadership is part, is essential in collaborative planning. I think that she is a very disciplined and structured principal, compassionate about her job, and if you've got those items then, then I feel you can't go wrong.

The following interviewee talks about the air and accessibility of the SUN principal.

Teacher 4: It's just that our administrator has an air about her that you understand kind of where to go. She's easy to talk to. That helps. I don't feel intimidated if I had an issue, but I haven't since I've been here; which is good.

Interviewer: When you say she has an air about her, what does that mean?

Teacher 4: With Ms (principal's name), it just seems like, you know she just gives you insight. It's just, I don't know with Ms (principal's name), she just makes it clear

what she's expecting. There are clear expectations and you know when to do it. You know if you don't do it, you don't, ah. Me personally, I don't want to disappoint her because to me she is the best administrator that I've been under. And I don't want to disappoint myself and my students anyway. So, I do the very best I can, and I try to get along with everyone in the building and make myself available in my capacity. So, she's just, there's just something about her. I don't know I can't put a label on it.

Interviewer: She's the best administrator you've had? Why do you say that? What's your benchmark? How do you assess that? What?

Teacher 4: I've only been under three different administrators.

Interviewer: What is it that's so different that makes her the best?

Teacher 4: I don't know. She's, she's very open. You know is no cut cards with her, and I like the fact that I am able to talk to her. You know and I don't have to worry about hearing it somewhere else. Hmm, I can email her, even on the weekend, and she'll respond. I don't know. She's just really, really a good person to be around. I want to help her by doing my job right.

Participants state that the principal allows teachers to do their jobs, that they want support on behavior and academic concerns from the principal, and that the principal provides this support. Participants claim the principal trusts teachers to be professional. They find the principal receptive and sincere in her questions. The participants further state that the principal has never come down on teachers, and that teachers are usually on point. They say that the principal is non-judgmental and supports teachers' choices. Participants note that the principal trusts teachers, and expects them to do their jobs. Though the principal listens to them, they state that the principal, nevertheless, holds them accountable.

The Pacing Sheet is the Agenda for the PDCP Session.

The pacing sheet answers the research question: What actions does the SUN principal take to implement the PDCP process? The pacing sheet serves as the agenda for all of the CP and PDCP sessions. At the PDCP sessions, the principal covers the topics outlined on the pacing sheet. She asks about the pacing guide, the core subject areas, assessments for the topics taught, the use of technology in instruction, the use of technology extensions, student work samples, tardiness, absences, and specific student needs. These pacing sheets are prepared by the teachers in their CP sessions, so they come with all the answers to the principal's questions regarding the sheet. During the PDCP sessions, the principal references her folder with the grade level pacing guides. In the following exchange, the principal meets with a grade level team, and she discusses reading.

Teacher 3: But I brought some of the kids' work; their writing. I'm particularly proud of their writing.

Principal: Okay. So you are on?

Teacher 3: Happy birthday, Dr. King.

Principal: Yes, I see that. So, is this theme 5, 4?

Teacher 3: Hmm. I think its theme 4 with problem solving.

Principal: I see this where it says happy birthday Dr. King, hmm.

Teacher 3: What's that theme 4? Can't even get it right. We're pretty much on target.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 3: Up to, up to date as far as that's concerned. They're doing predicting and inferring, cause and effect. And I, I think that's an old sheet. I just, I ran copies cause it just kind a helped me keep organized. These are for you. I didn't make copies of these yet. You want me to make copies and then I'll turn them into you?

Principal: Yeah, you can give it to me tomorrow.

Teacher 3: So, we're doing predicting and inferring cause and effect. Hmm, I'm continuing to go over the areas of weakness for them which is drawing conclusions.

Principal: I think that's just about across the board.

Teacher 3: Making generalizations, it's very hard, that's a hard concept to teach them, and honestly they can only get it through redundancy.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 3: Keeping charts posted. I, I did take them down after MSA, but I'm putting 'em back up.

Principal: So, what materials do you have with that? With that particular lesson?

Teacher 3: For drawing conclusions?

Principal: Yes.

Teacher 3: They have some graphic organizers.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 3: In the curriculum that we've used.

Teacher 3: And you know what else was really good when Ms X was in here, and we did the MSA strategies, and we had a folder on everything that we did on this so we would revisit it a lot through that?

Principal: How many kids would you say know it and don't know it?

Teacher 3: My top kids know. I want to say out of the total (grade level omitted) grade I can tell you directly in my class, it's about five in my class.

Principal: That knows it?

Teacher 3: That can spit it and they can do it. And in V's class about five. (The teacher names students).

The discussion above continues with the principal trying to determine why the students didn't understand the topic, with the teacher offering solutions. This is the standard mode of operation in which the principal asks about a subject, asks for work samples, asks about student performance, and develops a discussion on how to get more

students to grasp the topic. This prying by the principal and guided brainstorming is one of the central activities of the PDCP process. Here an ongoing teacher evaluation paired with a principal mentorship takes place in an informal but timely setting. The teachers are not given a formal observation at the PDCP sessions yet they receive the benefits of a one on one interaction with the principal every two weeks.

The principal in a separate interview explains that research supports the PDCP session type activity.

Principal: Not all schools do, but certainly I know that it is important just from research, and just best practices that it you have to be involved in the conversations, and knowing what is going on in the classroom with teachers, and following the pacing guide, and looking at the curriculum progress framework guide to see where teachers are. If you don't, then you lose focus of what's going on in your building.

The Principal Helps Teachers With Their Lessons.

In order for any principal driven type of activity to be implemented, the principal or their designee must take some action. The research question for this study asks: What actions does the SUN principal take to implement the PDCP process? The SUN principal helps teachers with their lessons while implementing the PDCP process. She suggests more technology integration in the classroom. In the following exchange, the principal asks the kindergarten team about the use of technology in reading instruction.

Principal: Any opportunities for computers or technology when you're doing this?

Teacher 14: Hmm, we do computers, hmm, in their centers.

Principal: Okay

Teacher 14: But as far as trying to use, some of the stuff that they have, we use PBS kids a lot.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 14: And a lot of those like Martha Speaks, a dog one, they have some different types of games that they can do, certain skills.

Teacher 15: I use the Starfall one.

Principal: Yeah, Starfall? Okay.

The principal then asks about assessments to test student learning, and student test scores. In the following exchange, the Grade 1 teachers discuss their progress in reading in theme 7, and the principal asks about assessment.

Principal: So, when you end seven, ah, how did you assess their understanding of that?

Teacher 6: Ah, spelling tests, hmm, the theme test.

Principal: Oh, okay the theme test. How'd they do? They did well with it, or some?

Teacher 6: Some.

Teacher 5: There are high lows.

(The secretary interrupts as a parent wanted to meet with the principal. The principal stayed in the meeting.)

Teacher 6: They are getting a feel of sequencing and the order of things.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 6: Spelling for the most part, most of them are doing pretty well.

Principal: Okay.

Teacher 6: Spelling and the high frequency words, cause and effect, sometimes they have problems with it.

In the PDCP sessions the principal tries to help teachers. She asks if students have a chance to look at each other's work. At every PDCP session the principal asks teachers if they have any other concerns and if they need class materials. Teachers claim that the principal helps them obtain the equipment they need in class. She provides materials to

teachers at the meetings, and she asks teachers if they received the resources that she put in their mailbox. Teachers said the principal emailed information to help them in their class.

The principal is lenient when teachers do not provide requested materials at the PDCP sessions. In the following exchange, the kindergarten teachers do not bring their pacing sheet to the PDCP session.

Teacher 14: Okay. So usually we do this stuff in our rooms so neither of us, ah we don't have it written down. I was trying to get the (Teacher pause).

Principal: Well, you can just give; you can just put it in the a.m. You can just give it to me, put it in my box, because I just keep it a part of our academic portfolio.

The principal is also lenient about the format teachers choose in which to record their grades in their grade books. In the following exchange, the principal allows a teacher to use her own method of recording grades.

Teacher 16: I got a crazy way to do grades, this way.

Principal: Oh, I remember you told me how you. But hey!

Teacher 16: It works.

Principal: That's the method of your madness. So it works.

Teacher 16: I can keep track of things.

Principal: Yeah.

This leniency in allowing teachers to use their own methods of record keeping keeps the focus on the students in the PDCP sessions and removes potential tension between the principal and teacher. In the passage below, taken from the principal interview, the principal relates what she looks for in the PDCP and CP sessions. She explains that she wants teachers to help each other, and she wants to monitor their well-being.

Principal: Well, one, I am looking to see if teachers are interacting with each other. Now it's one thing when they come and they talk to me, but I'm looking to see if they are having instructional conversations with each other, if they are doing the same types of activities in the classroom. If one teacher's students are getting the concept and the other's class is not, I want to know what teacher A is doing differently than teacher B, and how could teacher B look to do as well as teacher A. And then just also asking them how they are doing personally. If everything was okay. And I think you have to be you know, be observant of that. You just can't do it every 4 months. You have to do that frequently, and monitor what's going on with teachers.

The Principal Provides Student Support.

In addition to helping teachers with their lessons, the principal is also concerned with the well being of the students. The principal asks about student concerns in every PDCP session and provides support for students. This action by the principal answers the research question: What actions does the SUN principal take to implement the PDCP process? She asks about their history, and she discusses the student issues with the teachers. She suggests in-school based resource people to assist teachers. She asks about the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) students and accommodations for them. In the following exchange with the Grade 4 team, the principal asks about ESOL students, listens to the teacher, and then suggests support for the student.

Principal: I'm trying to think about how many special education kids or kids like ESOL do you all have?

Teacher 4: I have. We have three ESOL.

Principal: You have three ESOL?

Teacher 4: Hmm.

Principal: And special education?

Teacher 4: No, they're not special education

Principal: No. Just ESOL. Just three.

Teacher 3: Three.

Principal: So, they have to get the same prompts as them or do you give them.

Teacher 3: They're modified. We can modify.

Principal: You give them modified.

Teacher 3: Yeah, I modify for them.

Teacher 4: (Student Name) doesn't need modification.

Teacher 3: She doesn't need that at all. (Student Name) honestly doesn't either.

Teacher 4: But (Student Name) doesn't just do ESOL.

Teacher 3: She, oh, okay, good, she has. That's right. I keep forgetting. Lord have mercy, forgive me.

Principal: Hmm, okay. Well that's good you're see an improvement. Especially with
hmm. Now (ESOL) is testing them. Isn't she going to be testing them?

Teacher 3: Yes.

Principal: All right, that looks good.

The SUN principal discusses student academic concerns, and school-based academic support services for students. The principal asks about students referred for the School Instructional Team (SIT). She informs the teachers about decisions made at the Student Support Services Team (SSST) meetings concerning students. The SIT team was composed of the principal, school psychologist, and other support personnel. They discussed challenged students and tried to find interventions to provide the students with the support they needed to gain access to the curriculum. In the following exchange, the principal asks the third grade team about students referred to the SIT team for discussion at the SSST meeting.

Principal: Now we've had all the SIT referrals. Right? Anybody referred. All the people they had to SIT.

Teacher 12: We're meeting on (student name) tomorrow.

Teacher 8: (Student name) we had to sign up for testing. He sat out. I walked out the door to take the test stuff. There he's sitting for half an hour. He said to sit and do not disturb. He sat out in that hall for half an hour. The first time he's ever followed directions, and then he finished the test in 5 minutes, of course.

Principal: Is (student name) and (student name) tomorrow?

Teacher 12: No, we have (student name) next week. (Student name) is tomorrow.

Principal: Is this the results for (student name)?

Teacher 12: Yes.

In the PDCP sessions, the principal listens and makes suggestions when the teacher relates the difficulties students are facing and when student behavior concerns are voiced.

The principal asks about students of concern interrupting class events. She discusses mainstreaming, student improvement, rotation of student groups, the retention list, behavior concerns, truancy, tardiness, absences, in school supports for students, and home visits by the guidance counselor for habitually absent students. Teachers are usually quiet after the principal has suggested methods of providing student services.

This may suggest agreement with the suggestion the principal has made.

The Principal Creates Collaborative Planning Because She Wants Instructional Conversations With Her Staff.

In her interview, I asked the principal: What led you to want to create PDCP (see Appendix D for the principal interview questions)? This question was driven by the research sub-question which asks, what motivates the principal to want to create PDCP?

The principal responded that the system she inherited from the previous principal was

inadequate for her needs, so she implemented a new system that matched her vision. She states:

Principal: I guess because when I was an assistant principal and the current way that we had collaborative planning was causing some problems. We didn't have a time frame built into the master schedule. So, by the time teachers would come to planning and drop their kids off and pick them up, they only really legitimately have 15 to 20 minutes. And then the other piece was that they would always just turn in a piece of paper to the former principal. But, then there was no conversation from administrators with the teachers. And I thought that was something that was much needed. And that's why I wanted to change the format. So that I could be a part of the instructional conversations that were taking place with children and teachers, about children with teachers.

The Principal Creates a Master Schedule That Allows for PDCP and Collaborative Planning Meeting Times.

I asked the principal: How do you lay the groundwork for the process? Does it involve, like, your boss, or research articles, or directives from the county? Anything like that? This question was driven by the sub-research question: How does she set the groundwork for the CP process? The principal describes how she discovered a master schedule that allows for her to meet with teachers. She then relates how she introduced the idea to the staff.

Principal: As a part of my principal preparation program, we were assigned a mentor. And a part of that, it was I had to shadow her. And so I visited a principal in Prince George's County and I had an opportunity to sit in on her collaborative planning, which was principal-driven. And she had the (pause) and I asked her, how did she accommodate that? And she told me about how the master schedule was the driving factor in which she had the specials back- to-back to create an hour time slot. And then, that she would just alternate her schedule where 1 week the teachers would plan, and then the other week she would just try to make it a part where she could be in that. So, it came about for me actually visiting another school, and actually seeing it happen, and that fostered the interest to try it. And I think shortly thereafter that I asked you about it if we could put it in, if that would work. And she sent me a copy of (pause).

Interviewer: I remember that.

Principal: Yes, of her schedule, and I gave it to you to see if we could make it happen. That's pretty much how the groundwork started. And of course I shared it with the school planning and management team, which are the stakeholders, the leadership team of the school, and they were interested in it. So, that's how we moved forward with it.

The Principal Receives Staff Approval to Start PDCP.

One research problem sub-question for this study asks: How does she (the principal) set the groundwork for the CP process? In her interview, I asked the principal: How did you prepare your staff for the PDCP process? The principal replied that she brought the PDCP idea to her staff for their feedback before instituting it. She received feedback from the staff in conversations with them. The staff bought into the idea. In the following she explains the key reason for CP.

Principal: During the school planning and management team (SPMT) I mentioned it. And also, I think I shared it at a faculty meeting with staff, and told them about the process of what I wanted to do, and thought it would be better for us. Since at the time when we started it we were a school that was in improvement. So we were looking for any type of strategies and interventions that would help us to exit school improvement. So the goal was to foster everything around instructional practices. Since that was my first year as principal, you know, I wanted to be able to have meaningful conversations with teachers about the needs of their students, what strategies they're using, discussions, always ongoing discussions about student data, about student work. Those type of conversations. So, that's basically that's how that started.

The Principal Thinks Collaborative Planning and PDCP are Successful.

I asked the principal the question: How successful do you think the CP and PDCP sessions are? Why? These questions were created because of the research sub-question: What are the principal's thoughts on the effectiveness of PDCP? The principal used the reason for creating PDCP as her benchmark for judging the effectiveness of PDCP. Her

original goal was to create instructional conversations with teachers and, since she achieved that, she labeled PDCP as a success. In the following, the principal explains.

Principal: Well, I think it's successful because it's busy throughout the day. I know my schedule is hectic, and some days I don't get to see teachers. So, at least that's a period of time that I can at least have a conversation with them, and I know that communication is key and so I value that period of time as being valuable, just for the conversations alone, and just knowing that conveying to the teachers that I am supportive of them. If there is anything that they need I would try my best to get it for them, to advocate, to get resources. So, I value it as a successful tool in our school.

The Vice Principal Provides Administrative Support When the Principal Cannot Attend the PDCP Session.

One research question for this study asks: How does the principal's staff react to the idea of increased contact time with the principal? Teachers report they do not receive enough time with the principal and need more time with her. Teachers state the lack of a VP has a negative effect on the regularity of the PDCP sessions. They claim the process is easier for the principal if she has a VP. In the following exchange with a teacher, I, the interviewer, discovered that the PDCP sessions do not occur every two weeks as scheduled with her grade level (see Appendix D for questions asked during the teacher interviews). The teacher suggests PDCP sessions are not regular because the school does not have a VP this year.

Interviewer: How do you feel about having a PDCP session with the principal every other week?

Teacher 8: I think it's a good thing. To know what is required, how the kids are doing in the other classrooms, and getting the teachers together, even though we do it together as a group; the other day of the week. I think it was better when we had a vice principal. Better organized and more often. We haven't had that much collaborative planning this year with the principal.

Interviewer: With her?

Teacher 8: No.

The principal in her interview echoes the sentiment that without a VP, attending PDCP sessions regularly becomes a challenge for her. She relates her dilemma below.

Principal: And when I had an assistant principal, it worked well, which was the first 2 years, it worked phenomenal. Because, with my schedule, I have meetings, or either parent concerns, or things that go awry in the building that may take me away. At least when I had my assistant principal, she was there and that was a mainstay. The challenge this year has been because I am the only administrator with being consistent with that same format.

The PDCP sessions do not take place every two weeks as planned for many reasons. Some of these are weather related school closings, holidays, principal meetings, benchmark testing, state testing, field trips, teacher or principal illness, and time constraints placed on the principal due to the demanding nature of her job. Some meetings with the principal do not happen at all. In the following exchange, I discovered that the principal, due to circumstances outlined above, and the demands of her job, had not been able to meet with a certain grade level team all year for PDCP sessions.

Interviewer: I'm gonna ask you some questions about the principal driven collaborative planning process. Okay, where the principal is in the room. Not where you and the other teachers by yourselves are working. When the principal is there?

Teacher 17: Okay. So, this is solely gonna to be based on what I did for student teaching cause I never did collaborative planning with the principal here.

Interviewer: You never met with the principal here? You guys met. I saw you with the principal and Ms, ah, was it you?

Teacher 17: Never, never for fifth grade.

Interviewer: Oh, you know what happened? You are right because I didn't get Grade 5. (Referring to the Grade five PDCP session) Grade 5 had a testing meeting.

The New Master Schedule will be Driven by Vertical Planning

The principal was asked the following question in her interview: What are your plans for PDCP scheduling in the next year? This question was driven by the research sub-question: What are the principal's plans for the future of PDCP? In the following excerpt, the SUN principal explains her plans for the future of PDCP where vertical planning is included in the master schedule.

Principal: (Laugh.) I don't know. Usually, during the summer is when we get information if there are any changes to, you know, the hours, increases like for reading block, or for math, or science. I don't think any changes are proposed but all of that drives the master schedule. So, it's going to take some creative planning. I'll need your help with the schedule (Laugh) to accommodate the vertical. But, I want to be able to, it may have to change. Right now it's with the hour block. That probably will have to change since we are going to do a new format. But, to be honest, have I clearly thought about it yet? It's still a work in progress at this point, but the schedule probably will have to change to accommodate the new format. The teachers will probably still have that hour blocked in some kind of way maybe as not as frequent as it is now.

Interviewer: The teachers love the schedule.

Principal: Yes.

Interviewer: They are telling me don't change it.

Principal: Yes. (Laugh) I want to keep that because like I said the hour is so valuable, it is so valuable. But, I am thinking with the vertical I might have to incorporate paying for subs and do that, maybe like every month or every 2 months. I'm not sure how much money I would need to do that, because in order to have the vertical I'm going to need all of those teachers in there.

Interviewer: Okay. Yes like three grades at a time.

Principal: Yes, I'm going to need to stagger it in like that, so if I'm doing reading I might have K 1 and 2 teachers together. If I'm doing four, five, and six reading teachers together, I might have to do it that way.

Interviewer: Right.

Principal: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Principal: There are a couple of principals who do a really good job at vertical. I have been trying to get in contact with them to see how it really works. I've never done it before, but it is something that I strongly want to do for the new school year.

Summary

In this chapter the data collected for this study are presented. They are sorted according to themes that arose. Data from observations of the CP sessions, the PDCP sessions, and teacher interviews are presented. Findings from the principal interviews are also presented. In this study, teachers and the administrator see value in PDCP, but state that it needs to be scheduled during the workday. The best approach occurs with a principal, a VP, a CP session, a PDCP session, and a pacing guide. In the next chapter, conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are presented.

Chapter Five Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter contains Conclusions and Recommendations based on the findings presented in chapter four.

Departmentalization Makes Collaboration on Curriculum More Difficult Sometimes.

Conclusion.

Participants claim that departmentalization prevents them from being collaborative. This is understandable as teachers in the upper four grades are departmentalized and teach different subject areas to the children. One teacher would teach Math and Science while the other would teach Reading and Social Studies. Teachers should only be able to collaborate if there were two teachers on the same grade level teaching the same subject. At SUN there are two regular education teachers per grade level each teaching different subjects at the upper levels. At first glance, these teachers should not be able to collaborate as they teach different subjects. However they have been given time to meet and discuss teaching, and teachers still make suggestions for instruction in subject areas they are not teaching. This happens because most of them have taught all subjects before, and they all understand teaching and assessment. In addition, the departmentalized

teachers see the same students. They understand how the students learn, and they share strategies that have helped their students learn.

In addition, special education teachers teach self contained classes in the upper four grades. They do collaborate with the regular education teachers in the same grade on the same subject. This special education regular education collaboration occurs frequently in two of the four upper grades, less frequently in another of the four upper grades, and is non existent in one of the four upper grades.

Recommendation.

The research question for this study asks: What actions does the SUN principal take to evaluate and improve the PDCP process? Thousand et al. (2006) suggests that principals must assume the responsibility of evaluating the collaborative planning process at their schools. The SUN principal evaluates the effectiveness of the PDCP process at her school and has already considered including vertical planning in the planning schedule for next year. The staff suggests vertical collaboration. With vertical collaboration, teachers at different grade levels meet (e.g., Grades 4, 5, and 6), and they plan in their subject areas. I feel that she should continue pursuing her plan to use vertical planning. The benefit of vertical planning includes the sharing of teaching strategies between grade levels. This sharing can be used to help teachers find different ways of re-teaching a difficult to understand concept. It can also help teachers in the upper grades simplify a topic using strategies found in the lower grades. The vertical planning can also provide a snapshot of what students are expected to know before they rise to the upper grades. This would help

teachers with their pacing as they would know why students should cover the material by the end of their year.

Working Together in the Collaborative Planning Session Creates Familiarity and Teamwork

Conclusion.

One of the research questions posed for this study asks: How does the SUN principal refocus her teachers so they choose not to work alone as with elective individualism, but rather choose to join with her and the other staff members in the CP process? The answer is the principal schedules meeting times for teachers which help them with more than just planning lessons in the classroom. By meeting regularly, teachers learn more about one another. They empathize with one another, and they develop a bond. The CP meeting place and time give teachers an opportunity to collaborate on aspects of school life other than the curriculum, aspects that are important to the lives of both students and teachers. Teachers discuss in-school functions, field trips, and students' personal lives, as well as brainstorm on ways to teach difficult-to-reach students.

Recommendation.

Perez-Katz (2007) suggests that “teachers who had an ally in the building learned a lot from informal conversations with one another. In addition, I learned that the best professional development happened when teachers had well-structured time to meet and reflect on their practices” (p. 39). I feel that the SUN principal should continue scheduling time for teachers to meet even though the teachers are departmentalized. By

scheduling time to meet, regular instruction need not be interrupted for teachers to discuss important school-related issues such as field trips, award ceremonies, and mainstreaming students. The principal can also schedule co-teaching and demonstration lesson opportunities during the teacher's planning time for regular and special education staff. The time spent together working and solving problems creates respect, a feeling of belonging to a team, and a bond among the teachers. These are desirable qualities which may make teachers work more efficiently and with greater job satisfaction. This research into CP reveals efficient teacher teams. I suggest that administrators explore the research on the creation of teacher teams, at different grade levels, and between regular and special Ed teachers. I also suggest that administrators look into the research on the impact of the CP created team on teacher turnover.

The Function of the Pacing Sheet Is Ambiguous to New Teachers

Conclusion.

Teachers dutifully meet and complete the pacing sheet at the CP session. Sometimes the new teachers do not understand why they complete the pacing sheet except that the principal wants it completed for the PDCP session. The principal had discussed the idea of collaborative planning and the reasons for it at a staff meeting the previous year. The continuing teachers who were at the staff meeting understand that the pacing sheet is placed in the principal's portfolio and is used as part of the accountability measures for her superior.

The principal and VP created the pacing sheet with the goal of monitoring the teaching process and developing conversations to help students learn. Even though the

teachers filled out the pacing sheet without understanding why they did so, the pacing sheet did monitor the teaching process, and developed conversations to help students learn. Therefore, the pacing sheet was successful in achieving its goals.

Recommendation.

The research question for this study asks: What actions does the SUN principal take to implement the PDCP process? She implemented the pacing sheet. O'Shea (2005) explains that CP has the potential to fail when proper directions are not given on how to conduct the CP sessions. At each session, teachers must be reminded that the pacing sheet is the agenda for their CP meeting. They must be told that the pacing sheet is the principal's way of knowing what is occurring in the school with regard to planning, teaching, evaluating, and supporting students and teachers. The pacing sheet also allows the principal to keep everyone on track.

Administrators willing to replicate the success of PDCP should consider the value of the pacing sheet and institute a similar monitoring and evaluation tool in their process. At SUN, the principal receives a snapshot of all teachers and students every two weeks at the PDCP session. The SUN elementary principal cautions, "If you don't, then you lose focus of what's going on in your building."

Special Education Teachers Miss Collaborative Planning Sessions

Conclusions.

I feel that the special education teachers have legitimate reasons for not attending the CP sessions. These teachers must complete IEP's (Individualized Education Program) which consume their time. Their students need constant monitoring and an ineffective or absent paraprofessional prevents the teachers from attending CP sessions.

Recommendations.

Hargreaves (1993) discusses teachers choosing to work alone, rather than collaborating, for a variety of reasons. Special education teachers need support so they do not have to forego the CP sessions. In addition, students with IEP's who access the general education curriculum deserve to have special education teachers working collaboratively with general education teachers. The special education coordinator and principal need to determine how to help the special education teachers so they can attend CP sessions. Special education teachers need the extra support because they have to create a least restrictive environment in order to educate their students. In addition, special education teachers have to comply with the law and meet the special needs of their children as outlined in their student's IEP's. I recommend that the special education teachers try to find ways to attend the CP sessions since all teachers benefit when they meet and discuss pedagogy and ways to support students. Research needs to be explored on providing support for, and reducing work stress on, special education teachers.

Teachers Feel Comfortable Working with the Principal in the PDCP Sessions

Conclusions.

The detailed structure of the PDCP session and the non-threatening nature of the principal at the sessions make teachers feel willing to participate in the sessions. The teachers feel the principal is interested in how they teach and what they teach. They also feel if teachers need any teaching materials, the materials will be provided. The principal is also interested in how well their students learn, and what can be done to help students who need additional support.

Recommendations.

Gates et al. (1997) mentions that leaders should provide support to followers if they require it. The SUN principal uses a variety of approaches to achieve her aim. The school benefits immensely from the principal's concern for staff welfare, her creation of the PDCP process to monitor the details of the teaching process, her creation of a scheduled meeting venue, and her use of a non-threatening leadership style that is good for the school. In this study, teachers adopted the principal's businesslike, non-threatening approach, and this learning experience carries into the classroom. I suggest, administrators look into the research to determine whether teachers adopt the attitudes and behaviors of their principals, as well as the impact of these attitudes and behaviors on student achievement.

Teachers Place High Value on Their Planning Time

Conclusions.

All of the teachers like the time given for planning during the day. They see it as very important because it helps them keep pace with their job. As special education teachers have weekly IEP meetings with the special education coordinator, the special education teachers have considerably less time for planning when compared to the regular Ed. teachers.

Recommendations.

Hargreaves (1990) talks about “the high valuation placed by teachers on the autonomy of each teacher in his or her own classroom” (p. 194). I suggest that the SUN principal continue providing time in the schedule for teachers to perform personal planning. Additionally, more research needs to be performed on increased planning time for teachers, teacher stress levels, and teacher effectiveness and how these issues relate.

Collaborative Planning Makes a Difference in Lesson Planning for Most

Conclusions.

Bredo (1977) mentions teachers may decide against conducting CP sessions because they do not see the benefit of CP, or because they are too busy in their classes. At SUN elementary, most teachers benefit from CP as they take something away from their colleagues in CP sessions which they use to enhance their instruction.

Recommendations.

I suggest that the SUN elementary principal continue holding CP sessions on the master schedule in which teachers plan at the grade level without her. Since teachers rush to complete the pacing sheet in 1 hour and do not have time to collaborate, the principal must encourage teachers to meet twice a week. Perhaps the teachers could use two sessions to complete the pacing sheet and spend more time discussing ideas to improve their instruction.

Teachers See the Principals' Leadership Style as Effective

Conclusion.

Ross and Gray (2006) speak about a transformational leadership style that influences teacher beliefs in working together and sharing common goals for their schools. Teachers at SUN want to do their jobs right because they are professional and want to do their jobs right, because they are accountable to the state as their names appear in state testing results, and so as not to disappoint the principal. This principal respects teachers as adults, and teachers respond positively to her respect for them. Teachers report that the principal never chastises them and that she is never negative.

Recommendation.

The SUN principal routinely tells her teachers that they are all accountable. She tells them that she would support them since they are doing their jobs. She also tells them that

if they are not doing their jobs then something would have to be done. The laying of the cards on the table by the SUN principal makes her transparent. Teachers understand where she stands. This motivates teachers to want to do their jobs. They feel they have the principal's support when they do what they are supposed to do and this makes for a gratifying professional work climate. The fact that teachers want to do what the principal asks shows that the principal's leadership style is achieving some success. I suggest that the principal continue being transparent and non-threatening, and that she continue respecting teachers as they respect her.

The Pacing Sheet is the Agenda for the PDCP Sessions

Conclusion.

Thousand et al. (2006), in their eight "Tips for Success in Collaborative Planning and Teaching," suggest that administrators establish and clarify collaborative goals to avoid hidden agendas. The SUN principal establishes the pacing sheet format as the agenda for each PDCP session. The teacher's collaborative goal in the CP session is to complete the pacing sheet. The stimulus behind the CP process is accountability and communication among teachers. This stimulus had been communicated to teachers at a previous staff meeting.

Recommendation.

I feel that the principal at SUN wisely avoided making the mistakes made at Alisal High School, O'Shea (2005), as the SUN principal gave teachers specific directions for

using planning time in the form of the planning sheet. I feel that the principal should continue monitoring the teachers' classroom activities by reviewing the pacing sheet format since what is monitored is completed.

The Principal Helps Teachers with Their Lessons

Conclusions.

The principal is very concerned about helping the teachers in their classrooms and with their students. She asks about student performance on each topic and tries to help teachers increase student achievement. This interest by the principal is welcomed by teachers and translates into the teachers' willingness to please the principal by doing their jobs.

Recommendations.

Crow (2009) discusses mentoring, coaching for support, joint planning of lessons, reviewing student work, and focusing on improving pedagogy in an attempt to raise student achievement. These things are all a part of this principal's approach to the PDCP session. I feel that the principal should continue her leadership style as it creates a non-threatening work environment which helps teachers focus on their jobs and on the students rather than on the principal.

The Principal Provides Student Support

Conclusions.

The SUN principal's actions indicate an understanding that, by providing support to students when students need it, she makes learning easier for the students.

Recommendations.

Crow (2009) in his discussion deals with educational leaders who question the reasons children fail, and who instead do things to help children succeed. He asserts that good school leaders use the school resources to deliver quality education for the children. The SUN principal should continue supporting students and should seek new ways to continue providing student support. Continuing support should take the form of guidance services, ESOL services, Student Instructional Team services, and psychiatric services. She could also encourage the formation of school based extracurricular activities that would give the students more avenues for success. These would include chorus, band, art club, safety patrol, chess club, science club, drama club, debate club, TAG program, basketball team, other sports teams, and etiquette club. New ways of providing student support could be a partnering with the PTO or a community based organization willing to support the emotional or financial well being of students. Some community based organizations could be the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program, and Head Start.

The Principal Creates Collaborative Planning Because She Wants Instructional Conversations with Her Staff

Conclusions.

The principal's reason for creating PDCP is to develop dialog with the teachers about all things instructional.

Recommendations.

Having instructional dialog in a PDCP session benefits the principal, the teachers, and the students. The principal states she created PDCP "So that I could be a part of the instructional conversations that were taking place with children and teachers, about children with teachers." I feel that all principals should adopt instructional dialog with their staff, using a principal-driven session as principals are more than just managers of the school--they are the instructional leaders as well. By adopting instructional dialog with teachers about students, principals would have a real time assessment of the needs of teachers and students. The principal should then be able to provide some assistance to meet the teacher and student needs in order to facilitate learning in the classroom.

The Principal Creates a Master Schedule That Allows for PDCP and Collaborative Planning Meeting Times

Conclusions.

Before the master schedule in any institution is redesigned, I feel that it needs a focus. At SUN the master schedule has a focus. The SUN elementary master schedule is built with the PDCP session in mind. It is built around a 1 hour block with specials back to

back that free up the classroom teacher to attend CP and PDCP sessions for an hour at a time.

Recommendation.

Thousand et al. (2006) state that principals must provide resources for collaborative planning and teaching, such as scheduling common planning, and teaching time. Should any administrator desire to replicate the results of PDCP, he or she should build a similar master schedule with time set aside for teachers to meet and plan.

The Principal Receives Staff Approval to Start PDCP

Conclusions.

Thousand et al. (2006) state, in order for principals to lay the groundwork for the CP process, principals must explain to the teachers the rationale for the process.

The SUN principal announced the idea of PDCP to the staff at the SPMT and the staff meeting. She described it as a strategy for helping the school meet AYP. The principal stated she considered the feedback from her teachers when making decisions about how to structure the PDCP process. She also said that she felt it unwise to force-feed people. The principal allows teachers to buy in to the PDCP process through conversation and feedback. Once the PDCP process began, the staff willingly took part in it as they were expecting it and understood its purpose.

Recommendation.

I feel that administrators who are willing to replicate the success of PDCP should encourage teacher buy-in to planning of the PDCP process. Teachers with a vested interest in an idea will most likely work with the idea and not oppose it.

The Principal Thinks Collaborative Planning and PDCP are Successful

Conclusions.

The principal achieved her goal of having scheduled instructional conversations with teachers, and she deems PDCP a success. So that PDCP works, she created the environment by modifying the schedule to reflect three 1 hour planning blocks. To monitor the process, she created a pacing sheet. She led by example, so she made every effort to meet with teachers, by grade level, every 2 weeks.

Recommendations.

The process of creating the environment, monitoring the process, and leading by example can be used as a summary guide for the administrator who wants to institute any PDCP like program.

The Vice Principal Provides Administrative Support When the Principal Cannot Attend the PDCP Session.

Conclusion.

Since a school is a dynamic environment, the administrative demands placed on the principal can make her regular attendance at scheduled PDCP sessions difficult. All sources of data collection in this study, the observations, and the interviews indicate that the VP makes the PDCP process more efficient.

Recommendation.

I feel that VPs should be appointed to schools, if at all possible. If not possible, the principal should appoint a lead teacher, or department head to serve in the VP's or principal's stead when they are unable to attend. Perhaps the principal can identify and appoint a reading specialist or a combination of lead teachers in reading, math, social studies, and science to chair the PDCP meeting and to complete the pacing sheet in the principal's or VFP's absence.

The New Master Schedule will be Driven by Vertical Planning

Conclusions.

The principal has not decided how to institute her plan for vertical planning, but she suggests ideas.

Recommendations.

In order to facilitate the creation of time for vertical planning on the schedule I suggest the principal not abandon the existing CP format in which teachers meet by grade level. She should add the vertical planning component during CP time in the same manner that data utilization and augmentation meetings are scheduled during CP time. Perhaps the specials at different grade levels could be scheduled at the same time to accommodate cluster meetings. For instance, Music, PE, guidance, and media could be scheduled for Grades 5 and 6 at the same time. This way teachers for Grades 5 and 6 could meet for that 1 hour block. The schedule could be set up so the following clusters could meet: Pre-K and Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2, Grades 3 and 4, and Grades 5 and 6. Should the principal desire three grades to meet, she might hire two substitute teachers. The cost of two substitute teachers would not be too great since the principal plans to have vertical planning perhaps once a month or once every 2 months and she would only have to pay for a substitute for one grade level on planning days.

Discussion on the Success of PDCP

The question remains whether PDCP was successful or not. In order to answer this question the goals of PDCP as set out by its creator must be examined. It was designed to provide time for teachers to meet and discuss teaching. Teachers have been meeting and discussing ideas. Therefore PDCP seems to be a success at meeting this meeting and discussing goal. However some grade levels are more successful at meeting and discussing ideas than others. Other grade levels only meet and report on their pacing to fill out the pacing sheet. The reason for this is unclear. Maybe some teachers see the

benefit of meeting and sharing while others see meeting and sharing as a chore that takes them away from teaching. Maybe some grade level teams work well together because of the guidance of their grade level team leader. Maybe some teams work well together because they have an ideal number of teachers while other teams may have too many or too few teachers. More research is needed along these lines to determine why some grade levels are more successful than others at meeting and discussing ideas.

The SUN principal also designed PDCP to be an accountability tool. She needed a process whereby she could monitor teacher progress and provide assistance to teachers in a timely manner. PDCP allowed the principal to do just that. She has been able to meet with her teachers, monitor their pacing, provide assistance, and create a record of the process in her portfolio for her superiors. Since PDCP has provided the principal with the accountability tool the principal desired, then PDCP can be deemed successful at achieving the monitoring and accountability goals set out for it.

In addition to looking at the success of PDCP, its impact on the teachers must also be considered. Teachers have stated they take away useful teaching techniques and resources from the CP session. Some have stated the process does not help them in their lessons. Some teachers understand why they are doing the process and others do not. Some teachers do not expect anything of the PDCP process while others expect the principal to be there to support them. It seems that there are some teachers for and some against the process. One questions whether teachers are taking part in the PDCP process because of ownership of the process or because they feel duty-bound to their jobs, or to the principal. Teachers have stated they enjoy having the face to face interaction with the principal on a regular basis. Teachers have stated that they are happy with the PDCP process. However,

I question whether my presence in the room influenced the teacher's responses. I am uncertain as to whether teachers bought in to PDCP or not, so I cannot state that PDCP has been successful at teacher buy-in.

I also question whether Principal Driven Collaborative Planning has been successful at creating a professional learning community of the teaching staff at SUN. By having teachers work together every week in a scheduled planning session one would expect some learning within a communal mindset to take place. It seems that the professional learning community has been intentionally created at SUN. Even though formal team-building activities for teachers have been put on the backburner, by having her teachers focused on keeping up with the pacing and preparing students for their state assessment the principal has created efficient grade level teams.

Student performance on the state assessment is the benchmark by which the effectiveness of the administrator and teaching staff would be judged. The entire school is labeled as passing or failing depending on student state assessment performance. Therefore, the focus on the professional learning community at SUN may be justifiably due to the pressures of accountability placed on the principal and staff. Further research is needed on whether the creation of the professional learning community is of benefit to teachers participating in the PDCP process.

The professional learning community which has emerged in this study may have its merit. By doing student test data analysis, teachers may learn data utilization. Therefore teachers learn together while working on their job related goals. Teachers should be able to improve their teaching and assessment by taking part in their collaborative meetings. As such, the creation of the professional learning community may be the solution to the

demands placed on schools due to NCLB mandated state testing. I suggest that interested administrators explore the research on the merits, and impact of the professional learning community.

Discussion on Collaboration

Some teachers claim that the pacing sheet prevents collaboration as they spend time filling it out instead of collaborating. They state they perform only surface level reporting type conversations instead engaging in deeper collaborative type interactions. This leads one to question whether the ability of teachers to collaborate in the CP session is suffering because of the expectations set by the pacing sheet. Collaborative lesson planning could have happened during the time set for CP but some teachers have narrowed their own options.

The PDCP process at SUN has time built into the master schedule for teachers to plan during the workday without them having to worry about classroom coverage. This schedule has effectively freed up the teacher from classroom instruction for three hours during the week. During this time the students have Music P.E. Media and Guidance. The scheduled planning time does not cost the county any extra money, the students are engaged in meaningful instructional activities, and teachers are free to meet in their CP or PDCP session. Teachers meet with the principal for PDCP every other week. On the weeks when they have PDCP with the principal they can meet two times on their own. On the following week they can meet three times on their own. Instead of meeting three times for the week to collaborate some grade levels have arranged to meet only one time for the week to fill out the pacing sheet. They spend the other two sessions doing things

like planning on their own, grading papers, making copies of worksheets, and doing data utilization. These teachers should use more than one weekly planning session to meet with each other and explore collaborating.

Principals may want to implement PDCP to forge relationships and create effective work teams that have a common vision. With PDCP however the principal provides the structural leadership as she moves the process forward and teachers seem to be following her lead. Teachers don't seem to be planning to meet with their grade level coworkers on their own. In order for teachers to take ownership of the CP session principals may have to let the teachers make the agenda for their planning sessions as teachers have complained about the pacing sheet preventing them from collaborating.

As some teachers complain that the pacing sheet prevents them from collaborating, this does not mean that collaboration is not taking place in all grade levels. Teachers have been collaborating by sharing resources, and teaching strategies in the lower grades and one of the upper grades. This leads one to question why filling out the pacing sheet and collaboration occurred in some grades while in others only filling out the pacing sheet took place. This study does not answer the question as to why collaboration occurred in some grades and not others. Maybe teachers at different grade levels saw the goals of the collaborative session differently. Maybe the principal did not outline the goals of their session to them or maybe the teachers modified the goals of the collaborative sessions to suit their needs. Maybe more experienced teachers had more resources and teaching strategies to share than others. More research is needed in these areas in order to answer the question, why collaboration occurred in some grades and not in others.

The use of the pacing sheet in the CP sessions and the PDCP sessions gives the impression that PDCP is a model that is focused on content monitoring and not really learner focused. This is not true. While the pacing sheet does monitor the teacher's curriculum progress much more occurs in the CP and PDCP sessions. Teachers discuss instructional strategies, and ways to teach topics that are difficult for students to grasp at the CP session. Teachers discuss differentiated instruction and ways to motivate students at the CP sessions. Teachers also share resources and teachers are no longer isolated in their classrooms as they have other similar grade level teachers to speak with about their class concerns at the CP sessions. At the PDCP session the principal asks about students who have behavior, academic and attendance concerns and she addresses ways to meet the student concerns.

The efforts of the SUN Principal have not ceased with the new academic year 2010-2011. She has approached student achievement on different fronts. There is a revised pacing guide, and emails to teachers guiding them, indicating how she wants it completed. There are posters in the teacher planning room on planning questions. This is evidence that she continues to guide teacher planning. Planning questions include planning for higher order thinking, utilizing data to meet student needs, non negotiable items such as small group instruction, use of manipulative items and centers. Other planning questions include analysis of student work, and planning for sub groups such as FARM, LEP, ED, African American and Hispanic students. Planning questions ask about skills students need, testing students understanding or misunderstandings, indicator assessments, and lesson planning for small and large group instruction.

Summary

This study into the PDCP process revealed some topics worthy of future study. As stated, interested administrators need to explore existing research on the relationship of increased planning time for teachers, teachers' stress levels, and teachers' effectiveness. The existing research on providing support and reducing work stress for special education teachers also needs to be explored. Research should also be explored to determine whether teachers adopt the attitudes and behaviors of their principals, and what impact these attitudes and behaviors have on student achievement. This study suggests that teachers do adopt the attitudes of the principal. When the principal is focused on student achievement and actively engages teachers in studying student test data and finding ways to meet student academic needs then teachers mirror the principal's focus.

This study also reveals the five-part PDCP process: principal leadership, VP support, CP sessions, an agenda-like pacing sheet, and a master schedule that allows for teachers to meet on a regular basis. While each of these parts is worthy of future study, a combination of these parts does not ensure the same results seen at SUN elementary. However, the success of PDCP at SUN elementary indicates that PDCP is a worthwhile monitoring, mentoring, and evaluating tool, and thus should be considered at other institutions in which the needs to monitor, mentor, and evaluate teachers are present.

Based on this study I predict that principals who implement the PDCP process will effectively monitor teacher planning and provide assistance to teachers and students in a timely manner.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
OBSERVATION AND TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PDCP Observation Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	4 th Grade	1 st , K, 3 rd Grade			6 th Grade, Pre-K

CP Observation Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 2		3 rd Grade	4 th Grade		
Week 3	2 nd Grade			1 st and 5 th Grade	6 th Grade

Teacher Interview Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1		4 th Grade A	4 th Grade B	3 rd Grade A	3 rd Grade B
Week 2		Pre-K A	3 rd Grade C	2 nd Grade A	3 rd Grade D
Week 3	2 nd Grade B	6 th Grade A	6 th Grade B		3 rd Grade E
Week 4	5 th Grade A		Principal, 5 th Grade B		5 th Grade C

The above tables indicate the observations and interviews that took place during the data collection time frame. Data collection was scheduled to take place during a 4 week period. Sixteen interviews were conducted, and eight could not be done. These interviews could not be scheduled due to conflicts in the teachers' personal schedules during that 4 week period.

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Appendix B is useful to administrators intent on duplicating the PDCP process but not certain how to structure their schedules to facilitate the process. Below is the SUN master schedule for the school years 2010-2011 which shows the time set aside for collaborative planning for each grade as indicated by the Music/Physical Education, Media/Guidance time slots on the schedule.

CP is scheduled for 3 hours during the week, with Music/PE being taught for 2 hours and media/guidance being taught for 1 hour. Having teacher planning during the school day eliminates the problems associated with having teacher planning after the school day.

Having the Music/Physical Education, Media/Guidance teachers cover classes ensures that students will be engaged in meaningful activities while teachers attend planning. This arrangement also has no added cost to the county. This arrangement also eliminates the possible confusion that could occur with an A and B week schedule as the schedule is a one week schedule. This arrangement creates greater flexibility and allows the principal to create her own schedule so that she can sit in on the PDCP session.

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Pre K							
	Pre K		Pre K		Pre K		Pre K
Time	Tue	Time	Mon Thu	Time	Wed	Time	Fri
7:40-7:45	Announce	7:40-7:45	Announce	7:40-7:45	Announce	7:40-7:45	Announce
7:45-8:15	Morning- meeting	7:45-8:15	Morning- meeting	7:45-8:15	Morning- meeting	7:45-8:15	Morning- meeting
8:15-8:45	Literacy- centers	8:15-8:45	Literacy- centers	8:15-8:45	Literacy- centers	8:15-8:45	Literacy- centers
8:45-9:15	Storycircle	8:45-9:15	Storycircle	8:45-9:15	Storycircle	8:45-9:15	Storycircle
9:15-10:00	Music	9:15-10:00	Music	9:15-10:00	Math	9:15-10:00	Math
10:00-10:30	Lunch	10:00-10:30	Lunch	10:00-10:30	Lunch	10:00-10:30	Lunch
10:30-11:00	Media	10:30-11:00	Math	10:30-11:00	Music	10:30-11:00	Music
11:00-11:30	Guidance	11:00-11:30	Math	11:00-11:30	PE	11:00-11:30	PE
11:30-12:00	Centers	11:30-12:00	Learning- centers	11:30-12:00	centers	11:30-12:00	centers
12:00-12:15	Recess	12:00-12:15	Recess	12:00-12:15	Recess	12:00-12:15	Recess
12:15-1:55	Music	12:15-1:55	Music	12:15-1:55	Music	12:15-1:55	Literacy- groups
	Literacy- groups		Literacy- groups		Literacy- groups		Literacy- groups
	Learning- centers		Learning- centers		Learning- centers		Learning- Centers
	Cleanup		Cleanup		Cleanup		Cleanup
	News		News		News		News
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss
2:30-3:15	Prep	2:30-3:15	Prep	2:30-3:15	Prep	2:30-3:15	Prep

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Kindergarten												
	K A		K B			K A		K B				
Time	Mon	Wed	Mon	Wed	Time	Fri	Fri	Time	Tue	Tue	Thur	Thur
7:40-7:45	Announcements		7:40-7:45		Announcements		7:40-7:45		Announcements		Announcements	
7:45-10:00	Reading	Reading	7:45-10:00		Reading	Reading	7:45-9:15		Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
								9:15-9:45	Media	Guidance		
								9:45-10:00	Guidance	Media		
10:00-10:30	Lunch	Lunch	10:00-10:30		Lunch	Lunch	10:00-10:30		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Lunch	Lunch			Lunch	Lunch			Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
10:30-11:30	Socl Stds	Socl Stds	10:30-11:00		Socl Stds	Socl Stds	10:30-11:00		PE	Music	Music	PE
								11:00-11:30	Music	PE	PE	Music
11:30-12:45	Math	Math	11:30-12:45		Math	Math	11:30-12:45		Math	Math	Math	Math
12:45-1:00	Recess	Recess	12:45-1:00		Recess	Recess	12:45-1:00		Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:00-1:45	Science	Science	1:00-1:45		Science	Science	1:00-1:45		Science	Science	Science	Science
1:45-1:55	Pack up	Pack Up	1:45-1:55		Pack up	Pack Up	1:45-1:55		Pack up	Pack Up	Pack up	Pack Up
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00		Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00		Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss
2:00-2:45	Prep		2:00-2:45		Prep		2:00-2:45		Prep		Prep	

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 1										
	Grade1A	Grade1B		Grade1A	Grade1B		Grade1A	Grade1B	Grade1A	Grade1B
Time	Mon	Mon	Time	Wed Fri	Wed Fri	Time	Tues	Tues	Thur	Thur
7:40-7:45	Announcements		7:40-7:45	Announcements		7:40-7:45	Announcements		Announcements	
7:45-9:15	Reading	Reading	7:45-9:45	Reading	Reading	7:45-9:15	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
9:15-9:45	Media	Guidance				9:15-9:45	PE	PE	PE	PE
9:45-10:15	Guidance	Media				9:45-10:15	Music	Music	Music	Music
10:15-10:30	Reading	Reading	9:45-10:30	Socl Stds	Socl Stds	10:15-10:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:00-12:15	Math	Math	11:00-12:15	Math	Math	11:00-12:15	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:30-1:00	Reading	Reading	12:30-12:45	Reading	Reading	12:30-1:00	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
1:00-1:55	Science	Science	12:45-1:55	Science	Science	1:00-1:55	Science	Science	Science	Science
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss
2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 2													
Time	Grade2A	Grade2B	Grade2C										
Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon	Wed	Wed	Wed	Thur	Thur	Thur	Tue	Fri	Tue	Fri
7:40-7:45	Announcements												
7:45-9:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Science	Science	Science	Math	Math	Math	Math
9:15-9:45	PE	Music	Music	Music	PE	PE							
9:45-10:15	Music	PE	PE	PE	Music	Music							
10:15-10:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Math	Math	Math	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
10:45-12:15	Reading												
12:15-12:30	Recess												
12:30-1:15	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Media	Guidance	Guidance	Science	Science	Science	Science
1:15-1:55	Reading	Media	Media										
1:55-2:00	Dismiss												
2:00-2:45	Prep												

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 3												
	Grade 3A	Grade 3B	Grade 3E	Grade 3A	Grade 3B	Grade 3E	Grade 3A	Grade 3B	Grade 3E	Grade 3A	Grade 3B	Grade 3E
Time	Mon Wed	Mon Wed	Mon Wed	Time	Fri	Fri	Time	Tue	Tue	Tue	Thu	Thu
7:40-7:45	Announcements	Announcements		7:40-7:45	Announcements	Announcements	7:40-7:45	Announcements	Announcements	Announcements	Announcements	
7:45-8:45	Science	Science	Science	7:45-8:45	Science	Science	7:45-8:45	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
8:45-10:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	8:45-10:30	Reading	Reading	8:45-10:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	10:30-11:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:00-12:15	Math	Math	Math	11:00-12:15	Math	Math	11:00-12:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:30-1:00	Soc Std	Soc Std	Soc Std	12:30-1:00	Media	Guidance	12:30-1:00	PE	Music	Music	PE	Music
1:00-1:30				1:00-1:30	Guidance	Media	1:00-1:30	Music	PE	PE	Music	PE
1:30-1:55	Math	Math	Math	1:30-1:55	Math	Math	1:30-1:55	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss
2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 4												
	Grab-4A	Grab-4B	Grab-4C	Grab-4D	Grab-4A	Grab-4B	Grab-4C	Grab-4D	Grab-4A	Grab-4B	Grab-4C	Grab-4D
Time	ThruFri	ThruFri	ThruFri	ThruFri	Time	Tue	Tue	Tue	Time	Mon	Mon	Wed
7:40-7:45	Announcements				7:40-7:45	Announcements			7:40-7:45	Announcements		Announcements
7:45-9:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	7:45-9:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	7:45-9:30	Reading	Reading	Reading
9:30-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	9:30-11:00	Math	Math	Math	9:30-11:00	Math	Math	Math
11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:30-12:15	Science	Science	Science	Science	11:30-12:15	Science	Science	Science	11:30-12:15	Science	Science	Science
12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	12:15-12:30	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:30-1:00	Soc St	Soc St	Soc St	Soc St	12:30-1:00	Media	Media	Media	12:30-1:00	FE	FE	FE
1:00-1:30					1:00-1:30	Guidance	Media	Media	1:00-1:30	Misc	Misc	Misc
1:30-1:55	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	1:30-1:55	Reading	Reading	Reading	1:30-1:55	Science	Science	Science
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss
2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 5																	
	Grade 5A	Grade 5B	Grade 5A	Grade 5B	Grade 5A	Grade 5B	Grade 5A	Grade 5B	Grade 5A	Grade 5B	Grade 5A	Grade 5B					
Time	Wed Fri	Wed Fri	Time	Mon	Mon	Time	Mon	Mon	Time	Tue	Tue	Time	Tue	Tue	Time	Thu	Thu
7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt	7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt	7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt	7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt	7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt	7:40-7:45	Anoncomt	Anoncomt
7:45-9:15	Math	Math	7:45-9:15	Math	Math	7:45-8:00	Math	Math	7:45-8:00	Science 1	Science 1	7:45-8:00	Science 1				
						8:00-8:30			8:00-8:30	MUSIC	MUSIC	8:00-8:30	MUSIC	MUSIC	MUSIC	MUSIC	MUSIC
						8:30-9:00			8:30-9:00	PE	PE	8:30-9:00	MUSIC	MUSIC	PE	PE	PE
9:15-9:30	Recess	Recess	9:15-9:30	Recess	Recess	9:00-9:15	Recess	Recess	9:00-9:15	Science 1	Science 1	9:00-9:15	Science 1				
9:30-10:00	Reading	Reading	9:30-10:00	Reading	Reading	9:15-9:30	Reading	Reading	9:15-9:30	Recess	Recess	9:15-9:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
						9:30-11:00			9:30-11:00	Math2	Math2	9:30-11:00	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:00-11:00	Science	Science	10:00-11:00	Science	Science		Science	Science									
11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-11:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:30-1:10	Reading	Reading	11:30-12:30	Reading	Reading	11:30-1:15	Reading	Reading	11:30-1:15	Math1	Math1	11:30-1:15	Reading1	Reading1	Reading1	Reading1	Reading1
1:10-1:55	Soc Stds	Soc Stds	1:00-1:30	Guidance	Media	1:15-1:55	Media	Media	1:15-1:55	Science1	Science1	1:15-1:55	Soc Stds1	Soc Stds1	Soc Stds1	Soc Stds1	Science1
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	1:30-1:55	Reading	Reading		Reading	Reading									
2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	2:00-2:45	Dismiss	Dismiss	2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Dismiss

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Grade 6											
	Grade 6A	Grade 6B	Grade 6C	Grade 6D	Grade 6E	Grade 6A	Grade 6B	Grade 6C	Grade 6D	Grade 6E	
Time	Tue	Tue	Tue	Tue	Tue	Wed Thu	Wed Thu	Wed Thu	Wed Thu	Wed Thu	Wed Thu
7:40-7:45	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt	Anuncrmt
7:45-8:00	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2	Math1	Reading1	Math1	Reading1	Reading1	
8:00-8:30	Media	Guidance	Media	Guidance	Guidance						
8:30-9:00	Guidance	Media	Guidance	Media	Media						
9:00-10:00	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2	
10:00-10:15	Science1+2	Science1+2	Science1+2	Science1+2	Science1+2						
10:15-11:30	Math1	Reading1	Math1	Reading1	Reading1						
11:30-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00-1:00	Socl Stds2	Science2	Socl Stds2	Science2	Science2	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:00-1:55	Socl Stds1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Science1	Science1
1:55-2:00	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss
2:00-2:45	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep	Prep

Grade 6										
	Grade 6A	Grade 6B	Grade 6C	Grade 6D	Grade 6E	Grade 6A	Grade 6B	Grade 6C	Grade 6D	Grade 6E
Time	Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Friday	Friday	Friday	Friday	Friday
7:40-7:45	Anuncmnt									
7:45-8:00	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2
8:00-8:30	PE	Music	PE	Music	Music	Music	PE	Music	PE	PE
8:30-9:00	Music	PE	Music	PE	PE	PE	Music	PE	Music	Music
9:00-10:00	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Math2	Reading2	Reading2
10:00-10:15	Science1+2									
10:15-11:30	Math1	Reading1	Math1	Reading1	Reading1	Math1	Reading1	Math1	Reading1	Reading1
11:30-12:00	Lunch									
12:00-1:00	Socl Stds2	Science2	Socl Stds2	Science2	Science2	Socl Stds2	Science2	Socl Stds2	Science2	Science2
1:00-1:55	Socl Stds1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Socl Stds1	Science1	Science1
1:55-2:00	Dismiss									
2:00-2:45	Prep									

APPENDIX B
SUN MASTER SCHEDULE 2010-2011

Recess Schedule			P.E./Music/ CP/PDCP Schedule					
9:15-9:30	5th		Times	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
12:00-12:15	6th + Pre K		8:00-9:00	Gr6	Gr5	5+6Chorus	Gr5	Gr6
12:15-12:30	1+2+3+4		9:15-10:15	Gr2	Gr1	Gr2	Gr1	5+6Solos
12:30-12:45			10:30-11:30	TAG	K	Pre K	K	Pre K
12:45-1:00	K		12:30-1:30	Gr4	Gr3	Gr4	Gr3	TAG
			Media/Guidance Schedule					
			Times	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			8:00-9:00		Gr6			
			9:15-10:15	Gr1	K			
			10:30-11:30		Pre K			
			12:30-1:30	Gr5	Gr4		Gr2	Gr3
			Vertical Planning Schedule					
			8:00-9:00		6+5			
			9:15-10:15	2+1	1+K			
			10:30-11:30		K+Pre K			
			12:30-1:30	5+4	4+3		3+2	

APPENDIX C
SUN ELEMENTARY PACING SHEET

The following is an example of the SUN Elementary Pacing sheet used in the CP and PDCP sessions. This document has been altered to remove the names of the county, the administrator and the staff in order to protect their identities. The pacing sheet has also been reformatted in order to fit in this study. In this document, CFPG means Curriculum Framework Progress Guide. SIT means School Instructional Team. IEP means Individualized Education program.

SUN Elementary School

Grade Level Planning and Pacing Meetings

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Attendance	
Administrators: A, B	
PreK	K
1 st	3 rd
2 nd	4 th
5 th	6 th

Instructional Pacing

Subject	CPFG Pacing Theme/Chapter/ Day. How many days are you off within the framework?	CPFG Pacing Skills/Objectives for Next Week	Assessments Areas of Strength & Weakness. Plan for Enrichment/Re- teaching Activities	Additional Activities
Reading				
Math				
Science Health				
Social Studies				

APPENDIX C
SUN ELEMENTARY PACING SHEET

Academic Concerns	Attendance Concerns	Behavior Concerns	SIT/IEP Referrals
Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Date: Areas of weakness:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Date: Behaviors Exhibited:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date: Reason for Referral:
Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Areas of weakness:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Behaviors Exhibited:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date: Reason for Referral:
Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Areas of weakness:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Behaviors Exhibited:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date: Reason for Referral:
Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Areas of weakness:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Parent Contacted: Yes No Behaviors Exhibited:	Student's Name: Grade: Teacher: Referred to Guidance: Yes No Date: Reason for Referral:
Notes and Things to Do			

APPENDIX D
TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF PRINCIPAL DIRECTED COLLABORATIVE PLANNING
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Interviewer: Sydney M. Hay, B. A. Music Education, M. S. Ed. Educational
Administration, Ed. D. Organizational Leadership-May 2011

Teacher and Principal Questionnaire Instrument

Teacher Initial:

Location: NFES Rm. #

Time:

Teacher Biographical Information

How many years have you been a teacher?

How many years have you been at NFES?

Have you ever done any type of CP or PDCP at any other institution?

What is your level of certification? Provisional Certification? Professional Certificate?
Advanced Professional Certificate? Paraprofessional?

Do you teach regular Education, or special education.?

What grade do you teach?

Questions on the PDCP Process

How do you feel about having a PDCP session with the principal every other week?

Have you been exposed to trust building and creative problem solving activities as part of
staff development at this school?

How comfortable do you feel working with the principal in the PDCP sessions? Why is
that so?

Who makes decisions at the PDCP sessions?

What is the climate at the PDCP sessions? Should anything be done to change this? What
do you suggest?

What do you think the administration expects of you in the PDCP sessions?

What do you expect of the administration in the PDCP sessions?

Are you required to prepare any documents prior to attending the PDCP sessions?

How collaborative is the PDCP process at NFES? What do you bring to the table? What does the administration bring to the table?

Are there any pros or cons to attending the PDCP sessions?

Questions on the CP Process

What is your definition of collaborative planning?

Are you given directives as to how the CP sessions should be conducted or is there a plan to follow during the CP sessions?

What are your thoughts on having 3 hours of collaborative planning a week?

Are there any pressures of your job which make it difficult for you to participate in the CP sessions?

Have any of the pressures of your job been removed thus making it easier to participate in the CP sessions?

Are goals set for the CP process? Who makes these goals? Do teachers work toward these goals? Are these goals achieved?

What are the pros and cons of collaborative planning?

Are the CP sessions non-productive? Why?

What do you think can be done in the CP sessions to improve them?

How is the collaborative planning session making a difference in your lesson planning and in your instruction? Is it and in what ways?

Would you like to make a comment on collaborative planning in general and at this school?

Principal Questionnaire

What led you to want to create PDCP?

How did you lay the groundwork for the process--with your boss, with research articles, with directives from the county?

What obstacles to creating the PDCP process did you encounter?

What did you do to overcome these obstacles?

Did you have to deal with difficult personalities who were unwilling to work together in the PDCP process? If you had to, how did you?

How did you prepare your staff for the PDCP process?

What are your professional goals for the staff? What have you done to help your staff achieve these goals?

How successful do you think the CP and PDCP sessions are? Why?

What are you thinking of when you plan the PDCP session?

What are you looking for when you conduct the PDCP session?

What are your plans for PDCP, or scheduling, or instructional planning in the next year?